

## CROYDON SOUTH DEANERY SYNOD 2017/18

There were three meetings of Synod in 2017. The 2014-17 Synod met for the last time in February and the 2017-20 Synod met in June and October. There has been one meeting so far in 2018, included here for completeness.

On 22/2/17 at All Saints', Sanderstead Synod received a report back on the "Making Connections" Mission run by St Mark's, Woodcote, and St Swithun's, Purley in late 2016. Approximately half the churches then shared the joys, challenges, hopes & fears experienced within their churches.

Elections for the lay members of Synod, to sit until 2020, were held during the 2017 round of annual meetings. The 2017-20 Synod met for the first time on 21<sup>st</sup> June at St John's, Old Coulsdon. The first business to be dealt with was the election of Synod Officers and Standing Committee. It is noteworthy that Sanderstead provides all of the elected Officers – Indrani Balanchandran as Lay Chair, Kevin Wright as Treasurer & Chris Babbs as Secretary – as well as one of the two elected members of Standing Committee in Fr Grant Cohen. Canon Martin Greenfield and Linda Etheridge were also elected to the Deanery Mission & Pastoral Working Group.

The remaining churches then shared their joys, challenges, hopes & fears. Synod then heard a fascinating presentation by Mr George Dow, Environmental Adviser for the Croydon Episcopal Area, on a practical approach to the Fifth Mark of Mission – Care for creation. Churches could measure and improve their environmental performance by using the approach provided by the "Eco Church" project from "A ROCHA UK". A simple on-line questionnaire provides the measure and identification of areas for improvement, covering both the management of buildings & land and the place of environmental issues in worship & teaching. Churches can then progress to achieving an award. Bronze & Silver Awards are based on the on-line assessment and the Gold Award on a visit from an assessor. This has stimulated more activity on environmental issues in the Deanery. Within Sanderstead, All Saints' have been active on environmental issues for some time and had already achieved a Bronze Award.

Following on from this session, Synod Standing Committee decided that the next four meetings of Synod should each address one of the remaining four Marks of Mission (Evangelism, Discipleship, Service & Transforming Society).

Accordingly, the next meeting at All Saints', Kenley, on 10<sup>th</sup> October concentrated on the First Mark of Mission – Evangelism. We viewed a fascinating video, produced by the Anglican diocese of Toronto, which featured nine different new approaches to Evangelism. This included many good ideas which were reviewed when Synod broke into small groups for discussion.

The first meeting of 2018 took place on 7<sup>th</sup> February at Christ Church, Purley. This considered, and where necessary adopted, the new Rules and Constitution for Deaneries which had been approved by Diocesan Synod. We then turned to the Second Mark of Mission: To Teach, Baptise and Nurture New Believers. Each church gave an account of their approach to Baptism and its follow-up. A wide range of approaches was revealed, and many good ideas shared.

The new Rules and Constitution for Deaneries is one example of Bishop Christopher's general initiative to breathe new life into Deaneries. Deaneries and their Synods will come to play an increasingly important role in the life of the Church. A key role of individual members of Synod is also to act as the electorate for Diocesan and General Synods. Diocesan Synod Elections are due this year. Lay members of Synod elected in 2017 will serve until 2020 but there are vacancies in several of our churches. This year's annual meetings will provide an ideal opportunity to fill those vacancies, so that Sanderstead's voice can be given due weight.

Chris Babbs

PCC/Synod Secretary

13/2/18