

CROYDON SOUTH DEANERY SYNOD 2019/20

Croydon South Deanery Synod enjoyed an interesting and stimulating series of meetings in 2019-20.

During 2019 we considered the three headings of the Diocesan Vision:

Walking with Jesus and getting to know Jesus better as we journey on.

Welcoming all, embracing our diversity and seeking new ways of being church.

Growing in numbers, generosity, faith and discipleship as we grow God's Kingdom.

On 27th February at All Saints', Sanderstead, Revd Canon Jay Colwill, the Canon Missioner, spoke about the *Walking* with Jesus theme. He provided a very helpful explanation of how the various diocesan initiatives and targets fitted together. He also explained how the Mission Action Planning process could help us move towards a Fruitful Future, by defining "here" (our current situation), "there" (where we wanted to be in terms of Mission) and how we got from one to the other, focused on the Five Marks of Mission.

At St James's on 18th June Mr Peter Graystone, Diocesan Lay training Officer, gave a very stimulating talk about *Growing* in Discipleship. A key point was how the 40,000 Anglicans in Southwark could grow in confidence:

- In what we believe;
- In talking about our Faith with other people;
- In behaving as a Christian during the week.

At the final meeting of the year, at St John's on 10th October, Canon Will Cookson, Dean of Fresh Expressions and Director of Pioneer Ministry gave a most enlightening presentation on *Welcoming* new Christians by finding New Expressions of Church in a secular, pluralistic society. We had to hang onto the good things in our tradition, whilst finding new ways of expressing them. Some existing activities etc might have to "die to live" (in a different form), whilst many new activities would not flourish. It was better to try new things and "fail fast" if they did not work.

Our theme for 2020 is *Equipping God's People*. This started on 18th February at St Mary's, where Fr Grant Cohen and members of the congregation gave a hugely interesting and stimulating presentation on *Getting the Most out of Scripture*. This will be followed by sessions on *Lay Ministry* in June and *Talking Jesus* in October.

Synod has also covered many other matters. Prominent among these has been our responsibility to care for the environment (the Fifth Mark of Mission), both in what we do and in seeking to influence the wider society. At our February meeting, members signed a letter to Chris Philp our local MP, drafted by Bishop David Atkinson, reinforcing the need for radical action on climate change.

Breathing New Life into Deaneries is a key plank of the diocesan strategy for Mission. One aspect of this was the formation of a Deanery Leadership Team (DLT) to take over the functions of the Synod Standing Committee and the Deanery Mission & Pastoral Working Party. The DLT was commissioned by the Archdeacon of Croydon at the October meeting of Synod.

February was the last meeting of the 2017-20 Synod. A new one will be elected for 2020-23 at this year's APCMs. We hope as many lay people as possible will consider putting themselves forward as Synod representatives. Not only does membership offer stimulating content and the opportunity for fellowship with members from the other churches in the Deanery, but Synod members form the electorate for Diocesan and General Synods. General Synod elections are due this year, and those

for Diocesan Synod in 2021. If we want the voice of our churches to be given due weight in these crucial elections, it is essential that all our Synod places are filled.

Chris Babbs

Synod Secretary

February 2020