

This is for Deanery Report update for AGM 2017-2018

Reporting firstly on the speakers and main areas of discussion at the meetings this during this year and then information on Parish and Deanery appointments and re-organisation.

Meeting 31st May 2017 – St Laurence Church, Stroud

Sam Cavender, Diocesan Communications Office specialising in Digital Media, addressed the Deanery on the importance of being relevant in the digital age for all outreach. He took those present through the different types of social media available – Facebook, Snapchat, Tumbler etc and the typical age demographic more common to each. One statistic, of the many examples he gave, was 41% of 18-34 year olds are reached daily by Snapchat and this instant on-line media is now part of our culture and cannot be ignored. We need to be open to explore and make best use of the possible options available to us, if we refuse to engage we risk making ourselves irrelevant. He encouraged all the churches to visit the Diocesan website – to their communications page:

<http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/communications>

In addition, information was given out regarding the Stroud Deanery Life Vision leaflet, focusing on:

- Becoming more missional and intentional as churches
- Grow leaders and especially young leaders
- Prepare for greater pastoral outreach within our communities
- Be creative in our contact with our schools
- Share our faith with confidence in different ways
- Grow our own faith and help others on the road of discipleship
- Share good practice between the churches of our Deanery
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Meeting 4th October 2017 – Cainscross Church Hall

Rob French, from PSALMS began by telling us that PSALMS are refocusing on the original vision that was started up 12 years ago, using the universal language of sport, with a clear message from the outset always pointing towards Jesus. 80% of the population are involved in sports in some way and PSALMS use this opportunity to explain the faith and support young people with their life journey, through worship and witness not just with sports but also health, fitness and outdoors opportunities. Rob was very pleased to read in our Deanery Life vision our ‘intentionality’ to move from ‘passive to active’ to help shape the attitude and direction of Stroud Deanery into the future. A short film of photographs was then shown from their recent annual residential week. For more information and how to contribute to this valuable outreach please visit the PSALMS website for full details: psalms.uk.net

In addition Will Mansell from The Grace Network gave us a brief history of his journey from the football coaching initiative ‘Kick-off Stroud, (*A social enterprise that works with 100s of children each week in primary schools across the District which also provides work for young people through sport*) to his involvement with the Stroud Food Bank (*who now have 7 staff*), and more recently The Furniture Bank (*which provides quality, affordable furniture for families across the Stroud District and beyond*) and Kids Stuff (*provides free clothing and other items for families in crisis*), all under the umbrella of The Grace Network (*Not a charity but a business*). The aim is to see people reach their social, emotional, spiritual and economic potential by using the medium of business to develop, train and mentor people. Twenty people have come through the network so far and all bar one now have jobs. Their main aims are:

- To provide training for people in the form of mentoring and formal qualifications.
- To launch, manage and grow small social enterprises to create opportunities for people to develop.

- To invest time in people to help model and demonstrate positive lifestyles and create confidence that can build up self-esteem. (Heart, sole, mind, strength – taking someone with no skills and training them up and finding them worthwhile, paid employment)
- To provide warehouse and office infrastructure to allow social enterprises and charities to grow and develop
- To provide consultancy and advice to third party organisations and our owned subsidiary companies (Kick Off Stroud CIC and Stroud District Furniture Project CIC)

90% of their income comes from the Furniture Bank and local schools, with additional support from a small number of local organisations. The long-term vision to build one community, all working together for the good of all. (A model to bring young people towards Jesus). Will closed by saying “be encouraged, God is doing stuff in all sorts of places!”

If you would like to sign up to the mailing list for The Grace Network to receive just a couple of updates a year, please click on the following link: <http://eepurl.com/c6jiK5>

Meeting 21st February 2018 – Horsley Church

Noel Sharp, Regional Co-ordinator for Christian Aid in Gloucestershire came to talk about the two new initiatives taking place:

Salt – The Christian Aid Business Network which provides a new opportunity for visionary business leaders to partner with a leading international development charity. The Salt Network brings together business leaders to create a unique movement that unites the strengths of faith and business to tackle global poverty by learning about, support and engage in sustainable solutions for the world’s poorest reframing what it means to be in business. The power of three – they will hold 3 meetings per year, with each meeting lasting 3 hours, and take 3 pledges of things to adopt:

- Lead change within their own business environment, by developing and implementing responsible business practices
- Provoke a community of change by speaking with one voice to business, church and political spheres on issues that affect the world’s poor.
- Resource change by using their skills and charitable giving, increasing the scale and impact of innovative enterprise projects in some of the world’s poorest countries.

Global Neighbours School Project – a new School Accreditation Scheme in partnership with the Church of England Education Office, to encourage a deeper understanding in the next generation of global injustice and poverty and the Christian response to in in primary school children across England.

Resources are free and on the internet, specific to each school year/ages. Visit Christian Aid website for more information: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/homepage>

News from Diocesan Synod:

31st May 2017

Safeguarding and Human Sexuality are priorities for Bishop Rachel (+R) – a great deal has been done to help Diocese ensure systems and support are in place for any safeguarding issues and to take this very seriously. +R responded to the Bishops report that came out of General Synod on human sexuality.

Ultimately we all need to listen to each other, learn from one another and be able to respect each other’s views.

4th October 2017

Renewal and Reform – a presentation by Mike Eastwood on ‘Setting God’s people free’ and an update from the The Children’s Society, who are celebrating their 50 year anniversary this year.

21st February 2018

Presentation by the Ugly Duckling Company a not for profit charity which provides valuable resources to engage with those of no faith. Visit their website for more information:

www.theuglyducklingcompany.com/

Update on Safeguarding and GDPR, General Data Protection Regulations which come into effect for all organisations in May this year. The Diocese website has all the information for churches and from 1st March a new Helpline is available.

Parish and Benefice update by the Area Dean:

31st May 2017

Amberley – Revd John Spiers is in post as House of Duty Priest

The Stroudwater Team – a team rector has been appointed. Revd Steve Harrison will be joining from South Africa, arriving mid June, A second Team Vicar to work alongside him and Charles Minchin will follow shortly.

The Stroud Collaborate Team – vacancy now on website with interviews scheduled for July.

4th October 2017

The Stroudwater Team – With Steve Harrison now in place, work on the job profile for a new Administrator has been agreed. Grants are being sought to fund the post initially. The process for selection of a new Team Vicar is underway, with interview date set at 19th January 2018.

Stroud Team Ministry – A new team ‘Rectoress’ has been pointed, Revd Kate Stacey, currently in the Oxford Diocese – Licensing service due to take place on 28th January at Cainscross Church.

Bisley Benefice – The process has begun and adverts will be going out shortly. The Parish Profile has been drawn up incorporating the Life vision theme.

The Beacon Benefice – Mike Holloway has confirmed that he will be retiring just after Christmas.

21st February 2018

The Stroudwater Team – Revd Piz Palin will take up post of Team Vicar after Easter.

The Stroud Team – Revd Kate Stacey was licensed as Team Rector in January at Cainscross

Bisley Benefice – Revd Sue Murray will be licensed in March.

Brimscombe, Woodchester & Rodborough – Revd Deborah Curram has recently become Assistant Curate and on 1st February the three parishes officially become a combined Benefice.

Minchinhampton with Box & Amberley – Revd Helen Bailey left 28th January. The re-appointing process is now underway.

Update on Parish Share:

Diocesan Director of Finance, Julie Ridgway passed on her warm thanks for all the hard work and effort put in by our Deanery for 2017 – 98.9% of our required share was reached – a huge achievement!

Parish Share 2018 – the request was for £730,500 and as at February 2018 they are on £652,000 so well adrift. There are one or two significant reductions this year, with most of the others very close to target. Please keep this shortfall in mind as we all go through the year and if there are situation changes that mean more can be offered this would be so gratefully received.

During all the meetings there is an opportunity to chat and engage and hear news from other churches as well as taking part in lively discussions. Knowing that we are not in isolation is important to further the Good News that Christ has Risen! Alleluia!

Theresa Yates-Round
April 2018