

Norwich North Deanery Synod

MINUTES of meeting held Tuesday 7th February 2017

Stella Noons welcomed everyone to the meeting – the last meeting of the triennium. To any for whom this is their last Synod Stella thanked them for all their work.

30 people were present for the meeting.

The meeting began with a modern re-telling of the Good Samaritan story.

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| 01.02.17 | Apologies - Canon Simon Stokes, Sue Muspratt, Sally Spears, Colin Thrower, David Andrews, Marjorie Marshall, Michael Glover, Revd Marc Palmer |
| 02.02.17 | Minutes of the meeting October 2016 were signed as a correct record |
| 03.02.17 | Matters Arising – June meeting now not at Hellesdon – details of venue to follow Ascension Day service now being held at the cathedral. |
| 04.02.17 | <p>Carrie Sante – work with refugees and asylum seekers</p> <p>There are various ways that people come into the city and become refugees. The media raised the profile of Syrian refugees but in fact we are welcoming asylum seekers weekly into the city. They come from many different countries.</p> <p>About 8 years ago Norwich received <u>refugee</u> families from the Congo through the Gateway Programme in a similar way to how it has agreed to receive Syrians now - a lot of work goes on behind the scenes before people actually arrive in the city in these situations. There is an agreement that approx. 10 refugees per year will come from Syria over 5 years. Although much is focussed on Syrian refugees there are many from other countries arriving.</p> <p>There are two centres in London and Birmingham for <u>asylum seekers</u> and a number of dispersal cities of which Norwich is one. Some people arrive hidden in various modes of transport, others arrive on educational visas and things change for them or the setup in their countries change making it unsafe to return and then they claim asylum. Beds are made available in houses either as families or in single sex groups. They cannot work, though expenses are paid for the housing and they are given £30 a week for food etc. There is then a process they need to go through to officially prove their asylum claim which can take 3 months to 10 years! If leave to remain is granted then they can make application for housing along with everyone else on the housing lists. Any housing given is unfurnished and help is needed to claim benefits and overcoming language barriers and working out transport to appointments eg bus tickets. Last year 91 new asylum seekers arrived in Norwich.</p> <p>Several different agencies are involved – City Saints (which Carrie works with) was originally working with the homeless, but now also helps with settling refugees and helping with language training. Other groups working with asylum seekers and refugees helping them settle and integrate are City Reach Health Services, New Routes, English Plus, Bridge Plus, and House to Home. This last group was founded by a Coptic lady called Hannah who came from Egypt as an asylum seeker, now has refugee status and works with others in similar circumstances. It is important to remember that refugees and asylum seekers are not just poor people, they are often educated people who have had to move away from their homes and countries at very short notice.</p> <p>A question and answer session followed with the following information being shared: Most refugees arrive with families whereas asylum seekers arrive mostly as individuals. Many have fled to avoid conscription to ISIS forces and they are young men who have had to travel often on foot and sometimes they are Christians. Legal processes can be very</p> |

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| | <p>expensive – for asylum seekers there is a form of legal aid for initial appeals but there will be no financial aid available if that fails and they need to take it further, particularly using the Court of Human Rights. Once someone gets refugee status they can work straight away. There is a big Christian influence in the work being done in the city which includes people with health work backgrounds. Projects are being developed particularly by City Saints to fill the gaps where there is no one to help eg prescription charges, bicycles, furniture stores, lending scheme for electrical items for the house or garden. The question about homeless local people versus asylum seekers came up – someone with no connection to the city could not just arrive and expect housing. Schemes are being run in the city that help local homeless people as well as asylum seekers. Some people on the streets have a flat given them but then cannot budget or cook for themselves so help is being directed to aid these. There are of course some who just do not want to be homed, they are happy to stay living outside – this may be because of mental health issues, choice because of their background, general camaraderie on the streets. The problem of homelessness is set to get worse but we must avoid institutionalising people and fight against the lack of care being shown for people suffering through political decisions. There were leaflets available to the meeting about asylum seekers/refugees and organisations helping them with contact details. It is best to go through an organisation to get help for someone rather than to try and help someone on your own.</p> <p>If Carrie could change one thing it would be for individuals to ask God ‘what can we do’ about the situation.</p> <p>Stella thanked Carrie for her talk.</p> |
| 05.02.17 | <p>Deanery Handbook – was distributed to the meeting in response to a question about what Synod was for and all about and the role of Synod members. Stella commended those present to take the leaflet and read it carefully and feedback any responses, ideas or amendments to her. The leaflet could include lists of organisations with contact details within each parish. Possibly should include social media links and the question of a Deanery Synod facebook page was discussed, with notification of what is happening and speakers attending and then notes from the speakers. Is the booklet any use for attracting people to the Synod?</p> |
| 06.02.17 | <p>Who’s Who – At Standing Committee it was felt that it would be good to have a short input from a clergy member and a lay member each meeting so we can know each other better.</p> <p>Revd Margaret (Horsford) 4 months in post and loving every moment. Ordained 2012, first incumbency from the Stalham benefice. Passionate about people fulfilling their potential and being able to bring the best out of people. Also passionate about social justice both locally and internationally. Originally from Suffolk but spent more time in Norfolk!</p> <p>Andrew Alder – treasurer. Role to support parish treasurers. Background in banking and has been involved with various organisations and churches as ‘treasurer’. Andrew is willing to be an intermediary between parishes and the diocese and to give help generally to church treasurers and with finding audits. N.B. Please check your fuel accounts that you are only paying 5% VAT and not 20% - churches can claim the lesser VAT amount.</p> |
| 07.02.17 | <p>Diocesan Synod Report – No report was available at the meeting. Next meeting Saturday 25th March 9:30 at the Cathedral.</p> |
| 08.02.17 | <p>Date of next meetings – 15th June 2017 – venue to be confirmed. This will include a talk by Revd Keith about his work as Chaplain to the East Anglian Ambulance and Norwich International Airport. 18th October 2017 at Horsford. This will include a discussion about the human sexuality report.</p> <p>Plus a Deanery Ascension Day service will be held at the Cathedral 25th May 2017</p> |

Stella closed the meeting with prayer and we said the Grace together.