**Deanery Synod (Wycombe)**

Deanery Synod has been described as “a group of Anglicans waiting to go home!” This may be true for some deaneries, but we would certainly not apply that to Wycombe Deanery Synod meetings.

St Peter’s is one of about 35 Anglican churches in the Wycombe area (stretching from Stokenchurch to Loudwater and from Hambleden to Hazlemere) that make up the Wycombe Deanery. It is a mixture of urban and rural parishes, including some areas of deprivation, and each parish has representatives on the Deanery Synod. What is decided there can affect us here at St. Peter’s. We are part of that group of local churches and the deanery seeks to get these churches working together, supporting and encouraging each other and sharing resources.

This year the synod has met four times in different locations. Meetings are chaired by either the Area Dean, Rev Canon Dave Bull (Rector of the Marlow Team), the Lay Chair, Caroline Sants, or the Associate Lay Chair, Nick Gallant.

Agenda items always include Finance (including Parish Share), clergy vacancy updates and news from our churches. It is always exciting to hear what God is doing in our churches and this has led increasingly to them working more closely together and sharing ideas.

One of the priorities of the five-year Deanery Plan launched in 2020 was a Rural Review, concentrating on the 14 rural churches on the western side of the Deanery. Many of these rural churches are very small and do not have the resources ( or manpower ) that urban churches often enjoy and this makes life difficult for them, though their spirits are high and they mean a lot to their isolated communities. The Review has led to mutual support and pooling of resources between the churches, and continues as the Deanery’s Rural Forum. (Details can be found on the Deanery’s website [WycombeDeanery.com](http://www.WycombeDeanery.com) .) In 2023 an anonymous donation enabled the Deanery to appoint Charlotte Lawson as Rural Parishes Project Co-ordinator, to provide support, particularly to Church Wardens and other workers in the churches.

Another priority is “Next Generation” and at one of our quarterly meetings in 2023, we heard from a number of the Youth Workers from our churches, including St Peter’s own Mark Humphries. One important point made here was that each church could be doing something at their own level for the children and young people in their parishes. Following on from this, and thanks to another anonymous donation at the end of 2023 and a subsequent grant from Oxford Diocese, funding has been in place from 1st January 2024 for Mark Humphries to be seconded from St Peter’s to work for the Deanery one day a week in 2024. Mark has been building up contacts with the churches to see how he can help and encourage them to reach this “Next Generation”.

Particularly with these developments, we look forward to the exciting times ahead for the churches in Wycombe Deanery.

If you would like to find out more about what happens at Synod, please speak to any of us.

Ian Cheffy, Peter Loadman, Nigel Peach and Jono Walne