Cobham Deanery Synod Report

The Synod met 4 times this year, it being a time of transition in the Deanery.

The Rev. Jim Fletcher stepped down from his role as Area Dean together with Rev. Andrew Vaughn as deputy and Pauline Foster took over from Norma Crowe as lay-chair. However, it was not until October that Canon Alyson Davie was appointed new Area Dean, with Rev. Elizabeth Robertson as deputy.

In April, at All Saint’s, Hartley, the Synod discussed the positive results of the Bishop’s visit last December, as well as his initiative “Thy Kingdom Come”, with services across the parishes. The matter of the impact of the new GDPR rules coming into force was also talked about.

The June meeting took place at St. Nicholas, Southfleet, and welcomed Rev. Josh Young as their new incumbent, as well as new members of the Synod. There were reports back from “Thy Kingdom Come” and from the Prayer Group, which continues to meet regularly.

In October, at St. Barnabas, Istead Rise, Canon Judith Armitt gave a presentation about the proposed new indicative offers from parishes, which are currently out for consultation. It is hoped to devise a formula to calculate a fair and reasonable amount of financial offer, which each parish can afford to pay.

Rev. Andrew Vaughn spoke about his trip to Tanzania in June, which was the highlight of his sabbatical and very spiritually uplifting.

The February meeting was at St. John’s, Meopham, where two speakers, Susan Heads and Paul Thomas, talked about Faith at Work. Both spoke movingly about the complexities of sharing their faith with colleagues but not with clients. Both endeavour to show their love of Jesus through their care and actions.

Sadly Rev. Jim Fletcher is leaving for the new parish of St, George’s, Gravesend, and was thanked for everything he has done for the Deanery over the years.

Finally, Bishop James, hopefully now fully recovered from his recent illness, is to attend a range of services across the Deanery during Holy Week.

We wait ,with anticipation, to see what the new year will bring!

Hilary Morgan-Savage