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

Fabric Report for 2018 for APCM 7th April 2019, St Mary Magdalene

Due to delays caused by the bad weather and other factors, the HLF funded project was not completed until May 2018. This project comprised restoration and refurbishment of the chancel (internally and externally); repair of the rainwater goods around the whole church building; repairs to the stonework around the church; repointing and re-plastering parts of the south aisle; re-plastering parts of the north aisle.

**Chancel**

The hard, cementitious pointing was removed from the chancel walls, internally and externally; the exterior was repointed with lime mortar, new stones were inserted where deterioration was too advanced. Internally, the walls were re-plastered and limewashed. The cracked slate infill in the doorway in the south wall was removed and the opening bricked up and rendered both sides with lime mortar, then lime washed.

The stonework of the Early English double piscina in the south wall was repaired and a corroded iron bar removed. The finials on top of the reredos were repaired and reinstated.

**Repairs to stonework around the church**

Externally, extensive work was carried out to replace ashlar stonework that had deteriorated at the west end of the north and south aisles, the east end and north wall of the chancel and in the parapet of the north aisle. Repairs were carried out to the stonework of the windows where required.

The broken concrete corbel on the south west end of the south aisle clerestory was removed, the surrounding stonework repaired, and a new ashlar corbel inserted to support the west end of the south clerestory.

**Rainwater goods**

The rainwater goods around the building were all removed, renovated and reinstated. New stone chutes were installed in order to carry the water away from the base of the church walls.

**North and South aisles**

South aisle: repairs were carried out to the south wall towards the west end as the stonework was found to be in a poor state. The wall was re-rendered and lime washed.

North aisle: the back two rows of pews were temporarily removed and the wall re-plastered and lime washed up to the level of the window reveals.

**Lighting**

During the HLF funded project, the lighting in the chancel was replaced with LED floodlights. This has been a great improvement to light levels in the chancel.

Work is underway to replace the halogen lights in the nave, south and north aisles with LED lights, incorporating a bespoke dimming system.

The external floodlights were repaired where necessary and are all in working order. The decision was taken to continue with the existing metal halide floodlights until the units actually fail and then replace failed units with LED floodlights.

**Drainage, kitchen and reordering of the north aisle**

At time of writing, work is underway to produce faculty applications to submit to the DAC.

Jane Bubb, David Palmer