



**Harrogate Deanery Synod  
16<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**St Robert's Church, 37 Main Street, Pannal, HG3 1JZ**

**GUEST SPEAKER:**

**The Rt. Revd Anna Eltringham, Bishop of Ripon**

**Present**            14 Clergy            30 Laity (including 6 Parish Environment Officers)

**Apologies**        8 Clergy            9 Laity

**Welcome** The meeting was opened by the Lay Chair, Dr Susan Atkin, who warmly welcomed synod members and our guest speaker, The Rt. Revd Anna Eltringham, Bishop of Ripon. The Lay Chair also welcomed the Revd Matthew Peat and Mr Jeremy Frearson, as new synod members and six other guests:

- Deborah Booth, Harrogate Area Environment Champion, together with Ian Booth
- Mike Davies, Parish Environment Officer, St Peter's Church, Harrogate
- Liza Gisborne, Parish Environment Officer, All Saints, Kirkby Overblow
- Nicky Wynn, Parish Environment Officer, Knaresborough
- Tim Lerner, Parish Environment Officer, Hope Church

**Evening Prayer for Epiphany** was led by the Revd John Smith, Vicar of St Robert's Church, Pannal.

**Apologies for Absence** See above.

**Minutes of the Last Meeting** The Minutes were accepted and signed by the Lay Chair.

**Matters Arising not on the Agenda** There were no matters arising.

**Good News from the Deanery**

- 1) St Peter's Church, Harrogate:** The Revd Dr Alan Garrow, Area Dean, informed that St Peter's will be running a Bereavement Journey Course on Monday evenings from 12<sup>th</sup> February to 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024, at 6.30 – 9.00pm. The meetings will be held in the Brostoff Hall at St Peter's Church. If parishes have people in their community or congregation who might value this excellent course, they are encouraged to contact St Peter's. Details of the course can be found on the Harrogate Deanery website [www.harrogatedeanery.org](http://www.harrogatedeanery.org)
- 2) St Robert's Church, Pannal:** The Revd John Smith, informed that they had had a wonderful Christmas at St Robert's with 1000+ people attending services on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

- 3) **St John's Church, Bilton:** The Revd Simon Dowson, reminded members that The Revd Laura Martin, their existing curate, will be licensed as the new Team Vicar of St Luke's Church, Bilton on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The service will be held at St John's Church, Bilton at 7.00pm.
- 4) **The Benefice of Lower Wharfedale:** The Revd Stroma McDermott, informed that there used to be an Open The Book team, which ceased during Covid, however, Mrs Liza Gisborne, All Saints, Kirkby Overblow, is starting this up again and taking it into schools. Stroma said Liza will do a brilliant job.

**2024 Diocesan Synod Elections.** The Lay Chair drew members attention to the forthcoming Diocesan Synod Elections. She informed that each deanery is asked to elect clergy and lay members to the Diocesan Synod; clergy elect the clergy representatives and laity elect the lay representatives.

The allocations for 2024 – 2027 for Harrogate Deanery are:

- Clergy representatives – 5
- Laity representatives – 6

The Lay Chair said these elections will take place in the Spring 2024. Should anyone have questions or comments about this process, please contact the Lay Chair on [saj.atkin@btinternet.com](mailto:saj.atkin@btinternet.com) or the Secretary on [secretary.harrogatedeanery@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:secretary.harrogatedeanery@leeds.anglican.org)

#### **Vacancies up-date**

- 1) **Bilton.** The Revd Laura Martin will be licensed as the new Team Vicar at Bilton on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7.00pm at St John's Church, Bilton. Her licensing service will be led by Bishop Anna, and the Ven Jonathan Gough, Archdeacon of Richmond and Craven. All are welcome.
- 2) **Walkingham Hill Benefice.** The process of filling this position continues.

**Deanery Finance.** The Treasurer, Mr Iain Ward-Campbell, informed that the income has increased 5-fold this year, with the invested money garnering pounds rather than pennies, at last. Mr Robert Haskins, St James's Church, Wetherby, asked if a bank can be found that will provide greater interest. The Treasurer said it was possible but highlighted that Triodos Bank is an ethical bank and given the relatively small amount of money, he is reluctant to move the money at present. Should the invested sum increase, this might be more advantageous. The Treasurer informed that this is something he does monitor.

The Treasurer also drew attention to the Parish Share and urged parishes who can pay, to do so as the year progresses, rather than in one lump sum.

**Safeguarding.** Mr Stuart Newsome, St Robert's Church, Pannal, submitted a question regarding safeguarding:

Question: In the light of the death and subsequent inquest of Ruth Perry, the headteacher who took her own life following an Ofsted inspection, which was to downgrade her school to 'inadequate'; a

downgrade which it seems was a consequence of failures of compliance with safeguarding procedures and the coroner concluding that her death was contributed to by the Ofsted inspection, would you please outline in detail the Church of England's process for dealing with failures of compliance regarding safeguarding measures? It is my hope that a detailed response will provide Clergy, PCC and all members of our church with a better understanding, leading to a deeper level of insight and the opportunity for wisdom and reassurance.

Response: The Revd Dr Alan Garrow, Area Dean, started by thanking Stuart for his question as it is a complicated issue.

The Area Dean drew members attention to the excellent safeguarding board at the back of St Robert's Church which displayed the Church of England Safeguarding Policy Document. The Area Dean explained that PCCs make a commitment to uphold what is outlined in the Handbook. If they fall short, disciplinary procedures are automatically applied to the clergy concerned.

The Area Dean shared that some time ago he had unwittingly failed to comply with a safeguarding procedure and had automatically been disciplined. He felt that he had been treated well within the disciplinary process as he was allowed to have pastoral support throughout this process.

Addressing the question.. Could clergy find themselves in the same position as Ruth Perry? His answer was, 'No' as clergy are encouraged to talk to others and seek support whilst going through the disciplinary process.

### **Guest Speaker: The Rt. Revd Anna Eltringham, Bishop of Ripon**

#### **Purpose of the presentation:**

To consider what we can do, and how we can engage and encourage others to take care of and protect our environment. Bishop Anna set the scene by stating that 2023 was the hottest year yet on record, with significant evidence of climate change, i.e. floods, drought, heatwaves, and fires, etc.

#### **Background:**

Bishop Anna explained that she first became involved in the environment journey via the Fair Trade movement when she was in her twenties. She attended an open meeting which formed a wonderful movement to promote Fair Trade. She explained that this meeting 'lit a fire' for her as it was all about injustice. She became challenged by the unfairness and inequality in the world i.e. people in the UK having so much more in comparison to others who have so little, by chance of where they were born.

Bishop Anna explained that she felt inspired by the Holy Spirit to join in with God's kingdom and take action. She felt a responsibility to do what she could to redress the balance of inequality in small ways, e.g consider choices made in the supermarket and lobby for change. She said she was inspired to join this movement to help change hearts and minds.

### Where are you on this environment journey?

Bishop Anna acknowledged that the environment journey includes nature, and said she is saddened to see how habitats are being destroyed, and how climate change is killing the natural world, but what really engages her is people.

She asked each of us to consider where we are in relation to doing what we can for God's creation and the environment, individually and as a church. Where are we on this scale? Are we...

- Eco warriors – fired up to do everything we possibly can?
- In the middle – feeling a bit jaded but still trying to do something?
- Can't be bothered – feeling nothing is ever going to change?

### Root cause of the climate change challenge:

Bishop Anna asked what is the root cause of climate change? The answer is **greed** and a deep seated desire to accumulate wealth no matter what the cost. She stated the following statistics... The richest 1 per cent of the world's population are responsible for more than twice as much carbon pollution as the people who make up the poorest half of humanity.

Bishop Anna then read from Greta Thunberg's book, 'The Climate Book' (2022).

'As we distance ourselves further from nature, the harder it becomes to remind ourselves that we are part of it. We are after all, an animal species among other animal species. We do not stand above the elements that make up the Earth. We are dependent upon them. We do not own this planet, no more than the frogs or the beetles, the deer or the rhinoceros own it. This is not our world.

The rapidly escalating climate and ecological crisis is a global crisis; it affects all living plants and beings. But to say that all of humankind is responsible for it is very, very far from the truth. Most people today are living well within the planetary boundaries. It is only a minority of us who have caused this crisis and who keep driving it forward. This is why the popular argument that 'there are too many people' is a very misleading one. Population does matter, but it is not people who are causing emissions and depleting the Earth, it is what some people do – it is some people's habits and behaviour, in combination with our economic structures, that are causing the catastrophe.

The Industrial Revolution, which was fuelled by slavery and colonisation, brought unimaginable wealth to the Global North, and in particular to a small minority of people living there. The extreme injustice is the foundation that our modern societies are built upon. This is the very heart of the problem. It is the sufferings of the many that have paid for the benefits of the few. Their fortune came at a price – namely oppression, genocide, ecological destruction, and climatological instability. There is a bill for all this destruction that has not yet been paid. In fact, it hasn't even been added up; it is still waiting to be invoiced.'

Bishop Anna linked Thunberg's extract to a quotation by Mahatma Gandhi:

"The world has enough for everyone's needs, but not enough for everyone's greed."

## **Greed**

Bishop Anna referred to a series of Radio 4 programmes called, '**Seven Deadly Psychologies**', which take a cold hard look at the psychology behind each of the seven deadly sins. The Bishop urged members to listen to these programmes, specifically the one on Greed.

In this programme the presenters examine, 'the greed for money, for land, for material things – and ultimately for control, status, dominance, power. The kind of greed that separates the "haves" from the "have nots". They explore how greed is a great motivator, driving us all forward in our pursuit to get more of whatever it is we want, whilst on the other hand, greed can come at a huge cost to other people, and to the planet.' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001sv5c>

Bishop Anna then cited a Monopoly Experiment which examined the effect on people's behaviour and attitude when they have the advantage of being temporarily rich. The experiment posed the question: Does having more money make a person more inclined to share their wealth with others and acknowledge their good fortune? Answer: No! Research suggests precisely the opposite.

<https://reasonandmeaning.com/2021/10/24/the-monopoly-experiment-wealthy-people-are-more-selfish/>

Bishop Anna made the point that as we get richer we become more self-sufficient, so our need for other people reduces, and our need for community lessens, and as a result, and this is the key thing, *our ability to empathise reduces.*

She recollected reading a book by Jim Wallis, an American theologian and activist, call '**God's Politics**' (2005) in which he recalls being at theological college when he and a group of peers decided to look through the Bible and find all the verses that referred to poverty and wealth. They then cut them out of the Bible – thousands of verses went. 1 in every 16 verses in the New Testament were removed and 1 in 7 verses in St Luke's Gospel. At the end he held up the Bible and said this is now a Bible full of holes. The point they were making is that we *do* need to talk about poverty and wealth; it is 'the elephant in the room'. [https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/19127.God s Politics](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/19127.God_s_Politics)

## **The greatest commandments**

Bishop Anna urged us to think about the two greatest commandments on which Jesus bases all his teaching.

- 1) Love the Lord your God with all you heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.  
(Matthew 22 v 37)

Bishop Anna shared that over Christmas she had reflected on St John's Gospel.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.' (John 1 v 1-3)

Bishop Anna stressed that when God spoke creation into life, he believed that Jesus was there. So, when we hurt creation, we hurt the creator, and we hurt Christ. We, therefore, need to repent, mend our ways, and to do all that we can to stop hurting creation.

2) Love your neighbour as yourself. (Matthew 22 v 39)

This is the big one. We need to care for all humanity as much as we do for ourselves, and as everyone on this planet is affected by climate change, we need to act now. This commandment needs to stir up our empathy, encourage us to reduce our emissions and act in a way that shows our care and responsibility for all humanity. She made the point that our neighbours are not just those on the other side of the world, but those who live next door and of course, our children and our children's children.

### **People of Hope**

Bishop Anna emphasised that we are people of hope, and we need to believe that this world will be redeemed, and all things will be made new. She urged us to witness to that hope and not to lose hope.

### **A net zero Deanery**

Bishop Anna said how much she welcomes what Harrogate Deanery is doing to become net zero and encouraged us to do this together; to enjoy helping and encouraging one another. She recommended that we use this missional opportunity get others involved in what the church is doing to protect the environment. Bishop Anna concluded this part of her talk with some words from Sir David Attenborough,

‘We need to live more economically than we have done, and the excesses of the Capitalist system need to be curbed somehow. I believe ordinary people of the world are realising that greed does not actually lead to joy. Can we redirect greed to other things? Can we enjoy the richness of nature, and our experiences of other things.... The most important thing we need to do is to remove our reliance on fossil fuels. If we do nothing else; this is the main thing.’

Following on from this, Bishop Anna asked, if we are naturally greedy people, can we be greedy in a different kind of way? E.g can we be ‘greedy’ to see the gap between the rich and poor reduce? Can we be ‘greedy’ to see the planet thrive and replenish? Can we be ‘greedy’ to reduce our carbon footprint? Can we be ‘greedy’ to help others?

### **Practical actions:**

Following a question and answer session, Bishop Anna started to explore how Harrogate Deanery can become a Net Zero Deanery by 2030. She pointed out that this requires diocesan properties, schools, and church buildings to be run as efficiently as possible.

### **Becoming an Eco Deanery**

Bishop Anna said that there are 11 Churches in the Harrogate Deanery who have signed up to become an Eco Church, of which 8 Churches have already received awards; this represents approximately a third of the churches in Harrogate Deanery.

The Area Dean clarified the vision for Harrogate Deanery. He said that we have a year's work ahead of us to think about the various aspects of the Eco programme. The hope is that those churches who are ahead, will help and encourage those churches who are a bit further behind.

Bishop Anna encouraged churches to go onto the Eco Church system website, complete the survey and see where they are at the present time. There are five categories:

- 1) Worship and teaching
- 2) Management of church buildings
- 3) Management of church land
- 4) Community and global engagement
- 5) Lifestyle

She explained that in her previous church, different people took responsibility for the different areas. They then reported back on progress that had been made. She urged people not to feel daunted by it and to have a go. <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/eco-church>

### **The Environment Group**

Bishop Anna finished by recommending three relevant schemes.

- 1) The Green Journey – this is a package of energy saving services for churches provided by Green Energy Consulting. The Diocese of Leeds has worked in partnership with Green Energy Consulting since 2015 to identify ways of supplying renewable energy. This programme provides a quick and easy way for churches to change over to an energy supplier which has hardly any carbon emissions. <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/our-faith/environment/resources-for-my-church/green-journey-church-energy-bills/>
- 2) Give to go Green – This is a match-funding pilot project from the Church of England working with churches in the Dioceses of Leeds and Exeter to double locally raised donations, to allow for more work on reducing carbon emissions. The Give To Go Green pilot gave project grants of up to £2,500, £5,000 and £10,000 to 42 churches in the Diocese to match the funds they had raised. The pilot scheme has finished but more money will soon be released. Churches are urged to identify small to medium sized projects that will reduce your church's carbon footprint and cost between £5,000 and £20,000. <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/who-we-are/news/give-to-go-green-helps-churches-in-our-diocese-fund-carbon-cutting-projects.php>
- 3) Saving Creation Training – Bishop Anna reinforced the value of the Saving Creation training. <https://learning.leeds.anglican.org/course/saving-creation-bronze/>

This additional link <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/our-faith/environment/saving-creation-carbon-net-zero-church/> takes you to the website where you can find the Saving Creation Toolkit. The introductory webinar starts with a scriptural reflection on the gospel's response to climate change before looking at practical steps churches can take towards becoming carbon net zero.

Bishop Anna concluded her presentation by stating that, getting involved in this journey shows our love for God and his creation. So, get excited and get involved!

The Lay Chair brought the evening to a close by thanking Bishop Anna of Ripon for her inspirational, motivational and theologically based talk.

**A.O.B** The Area Dean drew members' attention to the next synod on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The speakers at this meeting will be Mr Tim O'Brien, Net-Zero Officer of the Yorkshire North and East Methodist District and Ms Rose Gosling, Summerbridge Methodist Church. The Area Dean encouraged members to feel free to invite anyone with responsibility for our buildings.

The Revd Simon Dowson, pointed out that the next synod on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, is at St John's Bilton, and suggested if members wished to visit St John's in advance, they could attend The Green Team Crafternoon, on Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 2.00 – 3.00pm. Here they can learn how to make beeswax wraps and mend clothing using the Sashiko technique.

<https://www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk/>

**Closing prayers** were led by the Lay Chair, who invited members to stand and say together, The Grace. The Lay Chair thanked everyone for attending. The meeting finished at 8.50pm.

## **FUTURE DATES**

- **Tuesday, 6th February 2024 – Standing Committee: 12.45pm**
- **Wednesday, 6th March 2024 – St John's Church, Bilton Lane, Bilton, HG1 3DT**
- **Thursday, 6th June 2024 – Standing Committee: 3.00pm**
- **Thursday, 27th June 2024 - Washburn Heritage Centre, Fewston, HG3 1SU**
- **Thursday, 24 October 2024 – Standing Committee: 12.30pm**
- **Tuesday, 12th November 2024 – St James' Church, Church Street, Wetherby, LS22 6LP**

**ALL SYNOD MEETINGS SCHEDULED – 7pm for 7.30 pm – 9 pm**



Please send any amendments, questions or items for the Standing Committee to the Secretary –  
Helen Camm at [secretary.harrogatedeanery@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:secretary.harrogatedeanery@leeds.anglican.org)