



Harrogate Deanery Synod

24th April 2023

St Mark's Church, Leeds Road, Harrogate, HG2 8AY

MAIN SPEAKER:

Canon Liz Morton, Children, Young People and Families Team Leader

Present 9 Clergy 28 Laity

Apologies 6 Clergy 10 Laity

Welcome The meeting was opened by the Lay Chair, Mr Justin Brett. He welcomed everyone and introduced three new members: Amy Lowe, St Oswald's, Collingham; Samuel Colburn Leach, St Andrew's, Starbeck; and the Revd Teresa McLaughlin, the newly appointed Priest in Charge of Washburn and MidWharfe. The Lay Chair also thanked the Revd Mike Resch and his team for arranging the venue and providing refreshments.

The Meeting Opened with Evening Prayer led by The Revd Mike Resch.

Apologies for Absence See above.

Minutes of the Last Meeting There were no emendations.

Matters Arising not on the Agenda There were none.

Good News from the Deanery

1) St James's Church, Wetherby: Mr Robert Haskins, informed that the parish is now a month into an interregnum, as the Revd Brendan Giblin left in March. Mr Haskins said that they are 'surviving' as there is a good ministry team including a number of retired priests. He informed that there are a few 'holes' requiring ministers in July, particularly at the 8.00am service and asked if anyone would be willing to offer their services, to please let him know.

2) St Andrew's Church, Starbeck: Mr David Leonard, explained that he had originally agreed to be a churchwarden, but when the treasurer resigned, he was asked to take over this position. Having agreed, Mr Leonard informed that there were 4 years of accounts to sort out, and although the accounts are still in the red, they are at least now up to date!

3) St Michael and All Angels' Church, Beckwithshaw: Mrs Katherine Wilson, Churchwarden, informed that, 'Muffin Church' now takes place on Tuesdays from 3.30 – 4.45pm. Parents and grandparents collecting their children from school are invited to participate in an interactive time of

singing, stories and prayers, with each child receiving a muffin. Mrs Wilson explained that they hope this 'proper little church service', will encourage people to become more involved with the church.

4) St John's and St Luke's, Bilton: The Revd Simon Dowson, informed that they have had a Parish Young People's Worker for the last three years, and £90,000 is required for ongoing funding. In the space of the last 6 weeks, £30,000 has been raised, which will enable the post to continue in the future.

5) St Mark's Church, Harrogate: The Revd Mike Resch, informed that St Mark's has been selected by the Church of England, to be a Minster Church for Children and Young People's Ministry. There are 14 such Minsters across the country and St Mark's will be involved in this exciting new project to see the Church of England reach a new generation with the good news of Jesus. This will involve Liz and Hannah receiving training by Jimmy Dale. St Mark's is offering to help other churches locally with their children's and youth work.

6) St Peter's Church, Harrogate: The Revd Alan Garrow, Area Dean, informed that the Harrogate Hub has been renamed 'Netmakers' <https://netmakers.org.uk/> As a movement of local churches, their mission is to work together in towns and villages to enable everyone to know the love of God and love of community. On Good Friday morning, Netmakers organised a multi-church service at the Cenotaph which was very well attended. The Area Dean also informed that last March, Netmakers organised an evening talk with Mark Greene, author and mission champion at The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity. The title of the talk was, 'The Bible is relevant for our everyday. Really? Really!'. The Area Dean, described the evening as 'high quality content' and urged members not to miss these opportunities but to come along and join in.

Vacancies up-date

- 1) The Revd Teresa McLaughlin was formally welcomed as the new 3-year interim Priest in Charge of **Washburn and Mid Wharfe Benefice**.
- 2) The Revd Lisa Holland and the Revd Stroma McDermott, **Knaresborough Team Ministry**, are swapping their roles. Lisa will become the new Team Leader and Stroma, the House of Duty. Their licensing service led by the Ven Jonathon Gough, Archdeacon of Richmond and Craven, will take place on Tuesday 25th April 2023 at 7.00pm, at St John's Church, Knaresborough.
- 3) There are currently two vacancies in the **Lower Wharfedale Benefice**. The Section 12 meeting has taken place and the advertisement will soon be published. There are two houses vacant; the Vicar and the House of Duty; which means that a Job Share is a possibility.
- 4) **Wetherby** – Mr Robert Haskins, previously appraised the meeting in the Good News section of this vacancy.

- 5) **Walkingham Hill Benefice** has a vacancy. The Revd Claire Renshaw has moved to Ripon and will be installed as Canon Pastor at Ripon Cathedral, on Sunday 30th April at 3.30pm. The Revd Simon Dowson, Assistant Area Dean, has taken charge of the vacancy during the interregnum.
- 6) The Revd Simon Dowson, **St John's Church, Bilton**, explained that the Team Leader position has still not been filled, but that he is showing an applicant around the parish this coming weekend.

Deanery Finance The Treasurer, Mr Iain Ward-Campbell, reported there was no substantial change in the finances of the Deanery, but said that things were improving as last year the quarterly bank interest at the end of September 2022 was £2.72 and by the end of December 2022 it had risen to £6.71. The Treasurer also thanked Parishes for getting in their share and urged them to contribute regularly.

Deanery Synod Elections The Area Dean informed that the 1st July 2023, is the start of new synod triennium and everyone elected to the synod by then, will serve for the next 3 years. He explained that elections are required for the new Lay Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Standing Committee.

An additional meeting on **Tuesday 11th July 2023, at St Peter's Church, Harrogate**, has provisionally been arranged to enable these elections to take place. The Area Dean, said that there is a possibility that the new Bishop of Ripon, (yet to be announced) may attend and celebrate the Eucharist at this service, though this has yet to be confirmed.

The Area Dean thanked Mr Justin Brett wholeheartedly, for his long service as Lay Chair, telling him that the synod has been 'richly served by you'. Mr Brett was presented with a bottle of port as a 'thank you' gift from the synod. Mr Justin Brett thanked the Chair and said that becoming Lay Chair had happened by chance 6 years ago and that it had been his pleasure to serve in the intervening years.

The Area Dean informed that Dr Sue Atkin, has offered to stand for election as Lay Chair, Mr Iain Ward-Campbell has agreed to continue as Treasurer, and Miss Helen Camm, as Secretary. However, if there are any members of the laity who wish to stand for election to any of these positions, please to inform the Area Dean prior to the meeting on 11th July 2023.

Guest Speaker: Canon Liz Morton, Children, Young People and Families Team Leader

Purpose of presentation:

To inform synod members about the focus and work of the Children, Young People and Families Team.

Focus

Liz began by introducing her team members and explaining the focus of the team:

- To support parishes as they seek to develop and extend mission and ministry with children, young people, and families
- To encourage people and build confidence
- To work with children, young people, and families in a variety of ways in person and online by...
 - Facilitating discussions
 - Delivering training and workshops
 - Providing practical support and information
 - Updating on resources and research in the areas of mission, ministry and children and young people's spirituality

Background and context. Where are we now?

Liz referred to some research carried out in Brazil, Canada, UK and US in the later stages of the pandemic, called 'The Future of the Church? Rethinking the framework of ministry among families'. Its purpose was to establish how churches had responded to children, youth and families during the pandemic.

The findings showed that...

- Many churches had done very little, if anything, during the pandemic
- Parents wanted support in nurturing faith in their children
- There was a mismatch between parents' expectations and the church's response
- 99% of churches do not have a written vision or plan for their work with children, young people and families
- Thinking strategically or developing a plan for how to work with children, young people and families is not seen as a priority

The research highlighted **three areas** requiring immediate investment:

- 1) **Developing relational opportunities.** It was recognised that developing relational connections amongst the congregation would enable families to feel more engaged, included and cared for as part of the community of believers.
- 2) **Intentionally supporting children at home.** It highlighted the need to affirm and support families who have engaged at home and to help those who have been struggling to grow in their faith.
- 3) **Actively talking with parents and children.** It identified the importance of finding out about a family's current situation, establishing their specific spiritual needs and discussing how to effectively partner with parents to nurture their children's faith.

Nationally the Church of England has three priorities:

- 1) To become a church of missionary disciples
- 2) To be a church where mixed ecology is the norm
- 3) To be a church that is younger and more diverse. The aim is to double the number of young people and children in the Church of England by 2030.

In the **Diocese of Leeds** –"Our vision is confident Christians, growing churches, transforming communities and so helping share the Good News of Jesus Christ across our young Diocese". And one of these goals is growing young people as Christians.

The aftermath of Covid

Liz acknowledged that Covid was difficult and that in many place families have been slow to return to church; they have got 'out of the habit' of going. However, the research does suggest that we need to have an honest assessment of what we did previously and recognise that we need to change and plan for the future.

Growing Faith



Liz mentioned that nationally there is really important work going on to support faith at home. She talked about the Growing Faith Foundation led by Lucy Moore which is seeking to bring together the three areas of church, school and home.

The Growing Faith Foundation has identified that there are three specific places where children's and young people's faith is developed – at home, at school and in church; these are the three ideal places where Christ is encountered, and faith is grown.

Liz informed that some dioceses have already been involved in projects that have started looking at these areas and explained that nationally the Church of England is looking at ways to develop 'resource hubs' which can provide innovative and creative spaces to model Growing Faith between church, households and schools.

Liz acknowledged that for many parishes, this may be a new way of thinking, but it's exciting! She explained that moving forward, they will be offering opportunities to help parishes consider how they can get more involved in this growing faith adventure.

Here are some ways in which the Growing Faith Foundation can help

- Helping to facilitate discussions and planning in parishes, benefices and deaneries.
- Providing workshops to support engagement with schools, exploring discipleship and supporting faith at home.
- Training for volunteers and leaders.

- Local learning communities and gatherings for a range of situations including Employed Workers, Messy Churches, Toddler Group Leaders.

<https://www.leeds.anglican.org/how-we-can-help/children-and-youth-work/growing-faith/growing-faith.ph>

TEND

The Diocese of Leeds
Children, Young People & Families Team
invite you to

TEND

For all those involved in ministry with children and young people in churches, these events are about:

Thanking you for your ministry to children, young people and their families
Encouraging and equipping you and those you serve to grow in faith,
Networking with others and sharing experiences
Doing - making time and space to set you up for what you will do next

Includes lunch!

Wakefield Cathedral - 22 April
 Ripon Cathedral - 13 May
 Bradford Cathedral - 7 Oct

To book your place, please visit:
learning.leeds.anglican.org/course/tend

Keynote speaker:
LUCY MOORE
 from the Church of England's
 Growing Faith Foundation

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
 Diocese of Leeds

Liz introduced TEND, the annual celebrations of children and youth work, designed to thank and encourage leaders and volunteers:

Thanking you for your ministry to children, young people, and their families

Encouraging and equipping you and those you serve to grow in faith

Networking with others and sharing experiences

Doing – making time and space to set you up for what you will do next

Lucy Moore, from the Church of England's Growing Faith Foundation is the Key Note Speaker

PLEASE NOTE...

The next event is on **13th May in Ripon Cathedral**. Should you wish to attend you need to sign up by **Thursday 27th April 2023**. Here is the link <https://learning.leeds.anglican.org/event/tend-ripon/>

The following evening is on 7th October 2023 in Bradford Cathedral.

What can your church do?

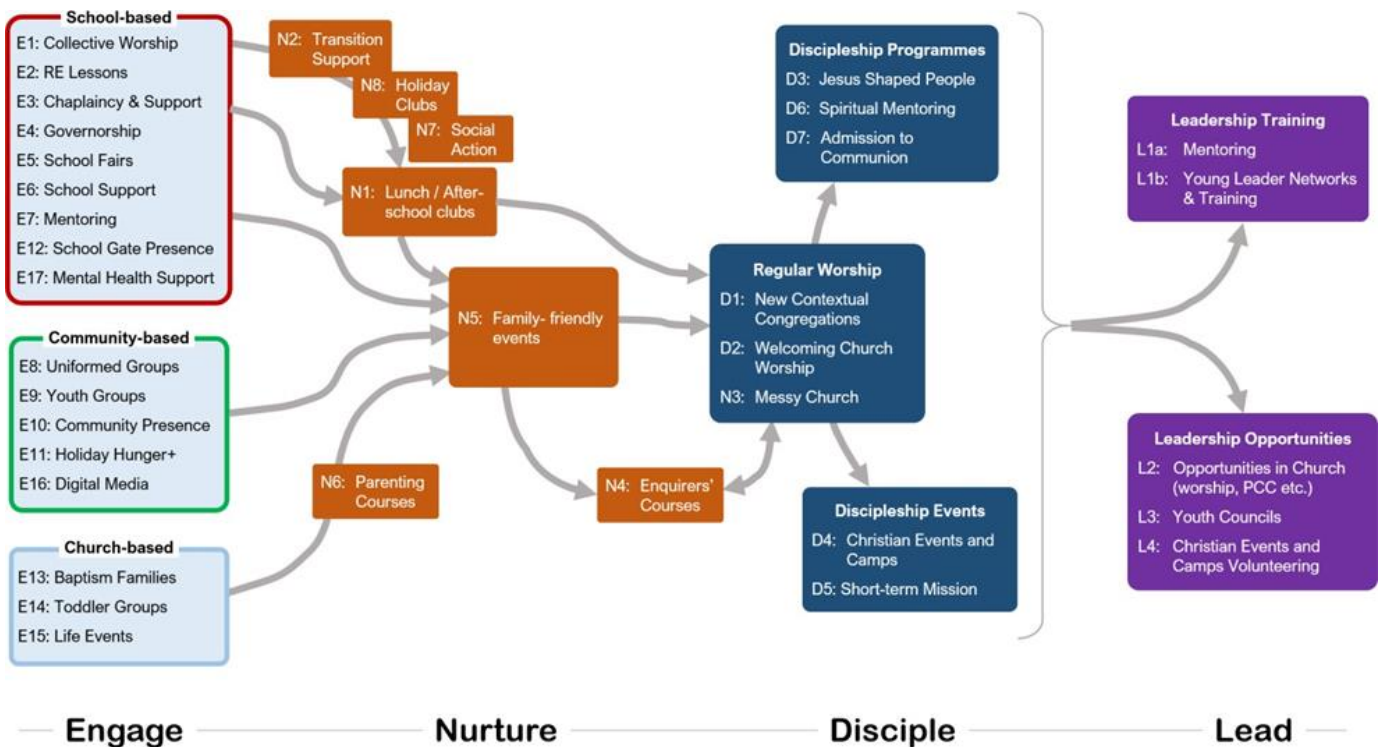
Liz moved on to ask members what they might do confidently in their own parish when working with children, young people and families. She explained that from the projects and places where they have successfully built up their mission and ministry with children, young people and families, two key pieces of learning stood out.

- 1) Be intentional about what needs to be done.
- 2) Recognise the importance of planning.

The key take-away message was... if we want to grow young people as Christians, and see families engage with the church, we need to **plan** for that to happen and we need to be **intentional** about making it happen.

Mission Toolkit

Liz then shared a new resource which has been developed to help parishes plan and grow in this area. It is called the 'Children, Young People and Family Mission Toolkit', and highlights 4 areas to help parishes tailor their approach to creating pathways to faith. The tools are categorised under 4 headings: **Engagement, Nurture, Discipleship** and **Leadership**.



<https://www.leeds.anglican.org/how-we-can-help/children-and-youth-work/mission-toolkit/>

Understanding the Toolkit

- Liz started with Engage and explained there are a lot of potential places where you might engage with children, young people and families.
- She stressed that the engagement column is not a tick list or a wish list.
- It is a list of possible ways in which to engage with families. It is up to you to choose your best opportunity and intentionally plan from there.
- Questions you might ask to help you decide which course of action to take include... **Why** choose that route? **How** will you start? **Where** would you go next?
- Liz explained that the grey lines give examples of potential pathways; they are just some of the possible ways to plan nurture, discipleship and grow leaders.
- The tool is an aid to mission planning and building confidence. It isn't about doing everything but choosing something appropriate for your situation and building intentionally on it.

Liz provided an example of contacting **baptism families**. She explained that she had emailed all the families (40 families) who had had children baptised during the year and invited them to the

church's Christmas activities. (Please ensure you get permission from families to hold their contact details and keep in touch, so as to comply with the rules of GDPR). Ten families sent their apologies but thanked her for getting in touch and 4 families actually came. Liz pointed out that in the world of marketing a 10% success rate is something to be celebrated. She stated that on average it takes 7 invitations until someone comes, so remain persistent!

Question to Synod Members: How might this be helpful in your context?

Responses

- **Mr David Startup, St James's Church, Wetherby** recommended that the parish doesn't wait until the new incumbent has arrived – but gets on with it now! He suggested that the parish should intentionally plan what the target should be and decide who is going to do what to achieve the target in the agreed timescales.

- **Mrs Moira Keith, St Wilfrid's Church, Pool** gave an account of the actions taken during the pandemic. She described how children, young people and families became one zoom family. And since the end of the pandemic, 4 of the churches in the **Lower Wharfedale Benefice** have started bespoke family services. She cited that on Mother's Day this year, 97 people attended the Family Service at Kirkby Overblow. Mrs Keith also described the actions the church takes to maintain connections with schools and foster good relationships.
 - Going into schools to do collective worship
 - Recognising the power of Mums talking about church services at the school gate
 - Asking the school to participate in coffee mornings and Mothering Sunday service etc
 - Involving children in the service in a lively and humorous way, so they are not bored
 - Making use of engaging PowerPoint slides and YouTube clips
 - Listening to what children say *they* want
 - Encouraging children to be actively involved e.g. in Messy Church, encouraging children to do the actions to the Lord's Prayer
 - Generally making church comfortable and welcoming to children and young people
 - Not underestimating the power of the relationship with the Mums and building on this

Liz thanked synod members for their invaluable contributions and said that she was going to personally find out more about the success of Muffin Church.

Children, Young People and Families Pathway – What next?

Liz briefly touched on other available resources and activities to strengthen the ministry with Children and Young People.

- 1) **Ministry with Children and Young People.** This is for everyone involved in ministry. It looks at Children Matter, Practical Matters, Faith Matters and You Matter. The programme was piloted last year, and so far three have run this year. The feedback is really positive. Come as a team!

2) **Pick and Mix workshops/sessions.** These cover everything from age specific sessions to Messy Church, Resourcing Sessions, and Building Teams.

3) **Mission Toolkit Workshops include Engaging with:**

- Christening families
- Schools
- Families through seasonal events
- Communities
- Toddler groups
- Intergenerational worship and prayer

Godly Play

Liz concluded her presentation by promoting Godly Play as an amazing way of engaging families and children.

Godly play is a creative and imaginative way of exploring the Christian story. It can be used in a variety of settings – church, schools, hospitals, care homes – to help people attend to God. It invites listeners into stories, helping them to discover things they would never previously have noticed. <https://d3hgriq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/63dac5b59618e/content/pages/documents/an-introduction-to-godly-play-1-.pdf>

The Area Dean said that Godly Play was some of the best training he had attended and informed that St Peter’s Church, Harrogate, is one of a number of churches to hold Godly Play resources. Liz informed that there was further Godly Play training planned, and The Revd Mike Resch, promoted Lego as being ‘the answer to engagement’ with children and young people.

Should you wish to find out more about any of the information discussed during the synod or to talk to with the Children, Young People and Families Team about what you would find helpful, please email: childrenyouth@leeds.anglican.org.

<https://www.leeds.anglican.org/how-we-can-help/children-and-youth-work/meet-the-children-young-people-and-families-team/>

The Lay Chair brought the evening to a close by thanking Canon Liz Morton, for a most informative presentation and discussion.

A.O.B Mr Iain Ward-Campbell, asked about the announcement of the new Bishop of Ripon. The Area Dean informed the synod, that ‘they won’t have to wait too much longer’.

Closing prayers were led by the Lay Chair, who invited members to say The Grace together. The Lay Chair then thanked everyone for attending. The meeting finished at 9.03pm.

FUTURE DATES

- **Tuesday 11th July 2023** – St Peter’s Church, Cambridge Road, Harrogate, HG1 1PB. Eucharist and elections for Lay Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Standing Committee.
- **Wednesday 20th September 2023** – St James’s Church Hall, Lackon Bank, Birstwith, HG3 2NG.
Guest Speaker: Theo Sheridan-Watts, Chief Officer, Wellsprings Together
- **Thursday 23rd November 2023** – St Andrew’s Church, High Street, Starbeck, HG2 7JE. Guest Speaker: The Rt. Revd Nicholas Baines, Bishop of Leeds

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

Please send agenda items and apologies to Helen Camm, Deanery Synod Secretary
secretary.harrogatedeanery@leeds.anglican.org