

## Deanery Synod Meeting Feb 4<sup>th</sup> 2014

Few items of substance appeared on the Agenda (as is the norm).

The current Synod's 3 year membership cycle ends with the forthcoming APCM round and new members will need to be elected. We can have two voting members plus clergy plus anyone else can attend in a non voting capacity (though there is rarely a vote on anything).

Usually the bulk of each meeting is taken up with guest speakers who are usually very good.

There is a 'Synod Members Guide' which will be circulated to all clergy soon if anyone wants to read more about the role of the Deanery Synod.

Jill Tucker will be holding a meeting with Treasurers and Church Wardens on Tuesday May 6<sup>th</sup> at Tysoe Church to share good practice. She is conscious that there may be people new to role and she hopes it will help them get to grips with the roles.

### Speakers.

Canon David Porter, Coventry Diocese Canon for Reconciliation and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Director for Reconciliation at Lambeth Palace (deep breath) spoke on the subject of reconciliation.

It was a really powerful talk.

He spoke about Syria, his work in Northern Ireland and mainly about the work he does with the Archbishop around women bishops and now gay marriage and gay priests.

He described his role as giving him "a ring side seat at the greatest bust up in Christendom!"

He showed just what a tough process reconciliation is – not the fluffy easy option that it is sometimes made out to be.

Kay Dyer, our General Synod Member, gave an update on Women in the Episcopate (women bishops to you and me). Her description of the last year served to highlight the impact David's input has had between the initial no vote in February 2013, the start of the thaw in June and the eventual rethink in November.

The February meeting was held in London, very formal; seating arrangements prevented everyone from seeing who was speaking; there was no chance to eat together; everyone in stiff, formal attire. Speakers for and against got up to speak in turn. Kay says you could feel the positive momentum ebbing away.

By contrast the June meeting was held in York. It was informal – shorts – t shirts – all ate together; socialised together, couldn't tell who was who. Tiered seating meant you could see everyone. There was a day long pre-session facilitated by David and hand picked volunteers where all parties could share how the process so far had made them feel.)

Something changed.

But David's honest assessment was that what really changed was that the 'anti' lobby decided to pull back and 'let' the vote go through – because they realised there was a bigger battle to be fought over gay clergy.

David thinks the gap over gay clergy is unbridgeable. We could kill ourselves in the trenches trying to get a solution on this. Or we could focus on how to live/be reconciliatory. He thinks about 70% could find a workable/acceptable solution. But thinks there is a hardened 15% at either extreme. He can't see a way to close the gap.

Kay? She feels that February saw the Church broken, opened up. We realised we are all human beings; all imperfect and just trying to be the best we can.

David said the question he always asks is 'Does this look like the sort of Church you could belong to in the future?' to help build dialogue and tolerance.