

## **Report from the Southwark representatives of the National Deaneries Conference 2016 “More for Less – Deaneries in Renewal and reform”**

Ten of us from Southwark went to the National Deaneries Conference in Swanwick on the weekend of 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> October. The theme of the conference clearly reflected on how Deaneries can support the “Renewal and Reform” programme.

Some of us were going for the first time and others had been before. Ven Alastair Cutting being a part of the organising committee. The following are the individual reports of some of us on the various sessions. The feeling was that it was a very good conference and we all learned something that we will take back to our Deaneries.

Recordings and presentations from many of the sessions can be found on the website [www.nationaldeaneries.net](http://www.nationaldeaneries.net) and are well worth spending time to read and hear.

### **Church Growth – The role of deaneries**

The first session of the conference was led by Rt Revd Ric Thorpe, Bishop of Islington. + Ric opened with a prayer in which he prayed for – “What might be rather than what is”.

+ Ric explained his history as have come from Holy Trinity Brompton to Tower Hamlets and now has a role in London Diocese as the bishop responsible for church plants. He told us to be imaginative in what we do; every church can grow which means every deanery can grow. He told us that every church was a plant and asked us to share with our neighbour “Who started your church and why?”.

He spoke powerfully on reaching into newly formed communities, housing estates and the like, or currently communities that the church had yet to reach. His message was that we, as the church, build the community first and then looked at issues of buildings.

The challenge for us all is to recognise change and then look for our opportunities. He suggested that a Deanery Synod could take a large piece of paper and draw an outline of the deanery. Invite the members of the synod to mark where their church is and then each parish look at the question “who don’t you reach”. This inevitably produces a long list of opportunities which must be condensed into a short but realistic list and the act.

Bishop Ric left us with:

- Deaneries can nurture growth – God makes things grow.
- Be prayerful and faithful – Deanery leaders can make it happen
- Give permissive encouragement – Deaneries can enable
- Be risk taking and creative – look for the entrepreneurs – Bishop Ric is a risk for London Diocese.
- Prepare for disruption!

Chris Elliott

## More for Less: Setting the scene

Rt Revd Peter Hancock

African proverb: If you want to go fast, travel alone. If you want to go far, travel together.

We are travelling together on this conference.



## Renewal and Reform agenda

Emma Buchan, Project Leader, Archbishops' Evangelism Task Group

Emma talked primarily about the *Thy Kingdom Come* project. This evolved out of an initial idea for a day of prayer and became an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York for all parishes to join a great wave of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost.

While acknowledging that the timing of communication needed to be earlier and clearer, the team were encouraged by the response and there will be a similar initiative next year (25<sup>th</sup> May – 4<sup>th</sup> June 2017).

Even with only four months lead time, successes in 2016 included:

- over 100,000 Christians involved
- at least 3,000 prayer events
- participation across the breadth of traditions
- ecumenical partnerships
- international participation
- beacon events full and watched by over 300,000 people online

For 2017 the vision is even bigger - but with the same aim which is:

“Our Hope: For all Christians to **deepen** their relationship with Jesus, so that we may have **confidence** to share our faith and that all may **respond** to the call of Jesus Christ to follow him.”

Specific goals are to have 80% of Church of England churches involved and 50% of Cathedrals. To help with this they will signpost to useful resources.

Progress so far is good and includes:

- support from all the CTE presidents
- support from International Methodist Council
- support from around the Anglican Communion
- that this initiative is central in the talks this week between ++Justin and Pope Francis this week

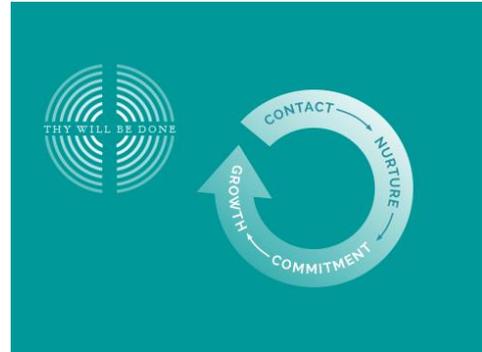
Emma showed a clip from the West Wing (series 6 episode 12) which encouraged “taking your own temperature” by asking two questions:

1. When called to this position, what did you hope to achieve
2. What are your Bolivia moments i.e. what are you dealing with that is urgent but is stopping you doing the important?

As we all know, urgency is the enemy of important!

Finally, Emma posed the question “What is God calling us to do?” and challenged deaneries to think about what they could do across a deanery.

She shared the “contact, nurture, commitment, growth process as a model for thinking about the journey towards church growth.



*They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*

*Acts 1:14*

More information here: <http://www.thykingdom.co.uk/>

Jackie Pontin

## Renewal and Reform

### Canon John Spence

Canon Spence ran amusingly through the Renewal and Reform agenda, a more complete version of which can be seen on the CofE website selecting Renewal and Reform from the front page.

He made particular note of;

1. The need for new ordinands, where we will need an extra 50 percent of successful applicants in order to retain present numbers. With concentration on women the young and BME
2. Funding the future, the reforms will involve around 1.5 bn GBP in total with 50 m GBP being allocated by formula to areas of social need, of which 24 m is available to Dioceses by grant application.
3. Lay ministry training is seen as a priority

He summarised with;

1. Nurture existing communities
2. Develop new communities in different areas `nobody need hide`
3. New planting of communities in areas of new development.
4. Clergy numbers are a challenge solved from growth in membership.

Our Role.

1. To be a conduit of communications from Church House and our Diocese
2. Flexibility. If something seems `good for them not for us` then adapt to our own use.
3. Be creative and own the solutions.
4. Develop new strategy and communicate upwards. Do not be afraid to ask for what we want.

Steve Taylor

## MISSION AND MINISTRY ONLINE

### *The online Anglican Community.*

The speaker was Dr. Roz. Clarke, known as the Online Pastor, from the Diocese of Lichfield.

In less than 45 minutes Dr. Roz had to describe the use and possibilities of Online communications for the church especially by providing a vibrant and responsive communication with young people.

She described the various choices e.g. Twitter, Facebook, Pin, Google+, Instagram (very popular), Snapchat, Vine (6 seconds allowed).

It is important to relate the appropriate style of Online communication to the desired audience.

There are 3 levels of online activity.

Level 1. is best used for information. Google is most suitable for the general use of churches. For example, imagine you need information about, weddings, funerals, baptism, moving into an area and searching for a suitable church, then what would you need to know? Always include the finishing time of services and keep the site updated. Best arranged so that 2 clicks provides the answer.

Level 2 Is used for 'reaching out', maybe to the Facebook Generation. They want to know who you are and what your message is. Demonstrate that the church is interested in them. Involve church members in doing this and responding.

Level 3 is used for 'bringing in'. Can you respond by being the required kind of community? Use a DVD to take information to those who do not have online facilities.

Dr. Roz particularly emphasised their successful relationship with young people. They give information, stimulate conversations, elicit and answer questions and exchange comments with their audience. "...a safe place for young people to explore and grow in Christian faith online".

More information from [online.pastor.org](http://online.pastor.org) <TGI Monday> <OP\_thewell>

John Parkes

## **Making Waves by Ali Burnett, broadcaster and journalist.**

The workshop was about reaching people through mass media. Ali started by saying that Making Waves is learning how to make a difference. She said that people are confused about religion and in a survey measuring the influences which people regard as important religion came 12<sup>th</sup> in a list of 50. She said that the church is not good at promoting itself and since people still get most of their information through the media then use of the media is mission. She said that image is important and it has been shown that we do not reach 85% of our possible audience. She asked, "Why are Christians not in mainstream media?"

Ali said that media can be thought of as mainstream, online and social. She said that there is a "them and us" attitude and gave a number of Bible references which referred to the use of the media.

1 Peter 3: 13 – 16 always be ready to give an answer when you are asked.

*<sup>13</sup>Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? <sup>14</sup>But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, <sup>15</sup>but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; <sup>16</sup>yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame.*

Matthew 5: 13 – 15 – don't hide away. Tear Fund are doing a great job in Africa but this is not publicised.

*<sup>13</sup>"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. <sup>14</sup>"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup>No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.*

Acts 17: 16 – 23, go where your audiences are.

*<sup>16</sup>While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. <sup>17</sup>So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and also in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. <sup>18</sup>Also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some said, "What does this babblers want to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities." (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) <sup>19</sup>So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus and asked him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? <sup>20</sup>It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means." <sup>21</sup>Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new. <sup>22</sup>Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. <sup>23</sup>For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.*

Matthew 13: 23, the message grows slowly – drip fed.

*<sup>23</sup>But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”*

Luke 8: 9 use money and resources wisely.

*<sup>9</sup>Then his disciples asked him what this parable meant.*

Matthew 25: 44 – 45 feed the hungry – there is a huge spiritual hunger out in the world.

*<sup>44</sup>Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ <sup>45</sup>Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.*

### **Christians and the media**

Ali said that Christians tend to run away, turn their backs and always try to preach to people, instead we should use the media responsibly and use the language that people understand.

How can we “salt” the media

- From the inside – we should get the media jobs
- Encourage young people to get jobs – send them out as missionaries
- Pray people in, become the gatekeepers
- From the outside, be free to engage

#### **For the church to be successful:**

Know your media – watch, read, listen.

Know your issues – what are the hot topics now.

Know your angle – what’s interesting to the audience.

Build face to face relationships.

Don’t be put off, keep trying.

Review our entire mission strategy, e.g. café church, twitter missionaries, sandwich boards, bookstall layout, “my story” leaflets, accessorise – using logos and slogans, advertise.

The session was enjoyable, interesting and informative. I came away with more tools for mission.

Jenny Thomas

## MAKING WAVES

### *Using communications to inform and shape mission*

The speaker was Alison Burnett, whose background included work as a journalist on local papers, for 5 years, responsibility for religious programming on BBC Essex and work on BBC Radio 2.

Prior to this session we had heard about the use of Mission and Ministry ONLINE. (refer to separate report)

Ali was concerned with promoting the use of radio and the press. She asked whether your church and deanery have a press Officer and do you realise that Press Liaison can be a valid ministry? This is an important consideration when “existing outreach doesn’t reach out” People out there are confused by religion.

It is through the media, mainstream, online and social that people still get their information through which we can reach the 85% who are neglected. She quoted bible references to support her statements:

1. Peter 1.3 v 13-16 ...be ready to answer when asked.
2. Matt. 5 v 5-15.....don't hide away.
3. Acts 17 v 16-35.....go where your audiences are  
(Don't come to us...Paul went to the market place)
4. Matt. 13 v 33.....the messages grow slowly
5. Luke 8 v 9.....use money and resources wisely
6. Matt 25 v 35..... feed the hungry

Get inside the media by seeking employment within it and encourage young people to do likewise.

She concluded by describing possible responsibilities for a Press Officer.

- 1, Get to know local stories including church stories.
2. Use press releases.
3. Give sound bites
4. Be proactive
5. Note contemporary news
6. Respond to noteworthy topics
7. Review mission strategy e.g. café church, clubs, Gospel in 140 words, bookstall, bands outside, “My Story” leaflets, jargon-free website, don't patronise, Radio adverts are trusted: use them. Slogans e.g. ‘Someone Cares’. Churches/Deaneries should have an advertising budget: which should help to reach outsiders.

Ali organises relevant training workshops <[burnett783@btinternet.com](mailto:burnett783@btinternet.com)>

John Parkes.

**Full Time Area Deans: Tim Marwood and Rod Cosh  
- experimental roles in the Bucks Archdeaconry of Oxford Diocese.**

About opportunity - and time - to develop Relationships;  
and Relationships enable Mission.

This is an investment of time, by an AD:  
with a good understanding of how churches can be inspired/developed;  
with personality, contacts, experience and confidence  
to work with clergy, laity and the community.  
We have examples of this in Southwark in reviving churches  
- and developing ecumenical and community links.  
The full-time AD is a facilitator, encourager, enthusiast - who is available.

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Started weekday working on planning and administration with free Sundays  
Began visiting/helping out (ie taking services) in churches on Sundays:  
'by the 3rd visit I was recognised and welcomed as a member of the local team, by clergy  
and the people' ie someone to be trusted.

Built relationship with clergy - AD's admin/planning knowledge of the archdeaconry/diocese  
was helpful to them - and he had the time to be 'someone for us'.  
Started weekly lunches for clergy, main lay members, chaplains and ecumenical partners  
from the communities. They realised who they needed to meet to develop their  
conversation/ideas etc. The network is strong; they now choose what to discuss.  
It was a significant payoff in relational energy.

For example:

Radio campaign at Christmas increased attendance and funds  
Deanery took a lead in welcoming 3 Syrian families, establishing a support team of  
volunteers led by the local Imam.  
Worked with local Council Chamber organising meetings of councillors and employees and  
helping their local community relationships.  
Is working with Citizens UK.

Now they think of it as a Deanery Leadership Team, not a Standing Committee.  
A team working to develop others, using the direct support of the Area Dean.

Sue Mallinson

## **Re-imagining Ministry - Revd. Canon Dr Roger Matthews (Dean of Mission & Ministry – Chelmsford)**

The theme of change was introduced again, the drivers being theological and practical. He used the following quote in set the climate.

*“The evangelisation of England ... is a work that cannot be done by the clergy alone... There can be no widespread evangelisation of England unless the work is undertaken by the lay people of the Church...the main duty of the clergy must be to train the lay members of their congregations in their work of witness.”* William Temple

Numbers of clergy have significantly decreased over the last century, the average age of clergy has risen to 55plus and yet the population continues to grow. This trend will continue until at least 2025.

Transforming Presence Chelmsford strategic response prioritises:

- Inhabiting the world distinctively
- Evangelising effectively
- Serving with accountability
- Re-imagining ministry

So far there has resulted in an increase in discerned vocations to ordained ministry and a revitalisation in licenced Lay ministers, introduction of Accredited Lay ministries and Lay incumbency.

Mission and Ministry Units have been established as the primary locus of Mission, they are diverse, geographically focused and work collaboratively. Each Unit requires administration by a “practise manager” with some skills in strategy.

The Archdeacons have an oversight role and clergy with appropriate skills have been appointed to head the 60-70 units. They ensure that there are no isolated ministers or congregations. The building of relationships are key and legal structures secondary.

The relationship between MMUs and deaneries is uncertain, the deanery may become the MMU or the MMU locally may develop into something different. Canon Roger spoke of an organic growth into something new.

### Some issues

Not all clergy or lay are co-operative

Culture change takes time

Differing roles for priests

Working with difference is not always easy, but is necessary for Mission

The roles of Deanery v Unit are not currently clear.

This is a long term strategy and a task set for the next ten years.

New forms of ministry which are being established include Lay congregational oversight; Lay lay leaders and Interim/Transitional ministry.

### Implications

This is new territory, risks will be taken and mistakes will be made. An environment will be encouraged in which change is normal. Training priorities will include learning on the job and leadership abilities. There will be coaching and mentoring for leaders and churches/Units encouraged and enabled to be communities of learning and practise.

A summary of Re-Imagined Ministry : *“ There will be a change from clergy being the ones who answer all the problems, to being the ones who ask the best questions.”* Canon Roger

Susan Height