

Deanery Synod Report: April 2021 – March 2022

The diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich is split up into 18 smaller Deaneries, each under the care of a local Rural Dean. Our Rural Dean is Revd Canon Max Osborne. The parish of Christ Church Moreton Hall is part of Thingoe Deanery.

Each parish is required to have a Parochial Church Council (PCC) which meets regularly to oversee church governance. Similarly, there is a Deanery Synod which meets three times a year, and every parish is asked to send two representatives to form part of this group, alongside ordained church ministers from the Deanery. Jonathan Corwin and I have attended as your representatives over this past year. Any church member is also welcome to attend a deanery synod as a visitor if they are interested in doing so!

The Deanery Synod acts as a midway point between local level church work and the county-wide work of the diocese. Each meeting provides updates on key decisions and information from Diocesan and General Synod, and the Deanery Organiser updates us on finances and Parish Share contributions.

Each meeting usually has a main theme. During the past year these were:

- **Diocesan Mission** (30th June 2021, by Zoom) – Revd Phil Dykes led discussions on how the church might go forwards effectively post-Covid restrictions. It is good to learn from and keep any newly discovered positives, whilst also moving back to previous ways of meeting that we have missed and might have taken for granted before now.
- **Lightwave** (11th October 2021, in person) – Synod welcomed Diane Grano from the Lightwave Red Lodge Resourcing Church. There are three Lightwave hubs across the diocese, and these aim to reach out in new innovative ways to their rural communities (e.g. with after school clubs, summer clubs, café church).
- **Bury Town Pastors** (23rd March 2022, in person) – Jo Copsey spoke to us about the valuable work of the Bury Town Pastors. This team volunteer in our town centre on Friday and Saturday nights (10pm-4am), providing a friendly, non-confrontational presence, and they aim to support anyone who might be vulnerable. Covid has really hindered recruitment, and they really need new Pastors and also people who are willing to pray for them. They are very happy for people to visit as a one-off to shadow them, to see if this might be something they would like to do. Please see their website for more information <https://burytownpastors.org.uk/>

At this most recent synod, the Rural Dean also encouraged us to make church members aware of the “Living in Love and Faith” initiative, which aims to engage congregations in constructive and loving discussions about some more difficult topics. The diocese website has more information and resources:

<https://www.cofesuffolk.org/deepening-faith/everyday-faith/living-in-love-and-faith/>