

Report of the Withington Deanery Synod 2015

There were three meetings of Synod during the year, at St Luke Benchill, St James and Emmanuel Didsbury and St Michael and all Angels Lawton Moor. The Deanery Ascension Day Service was held at St Chad Ladybarn and presided over by Bishop Mark. The Deanery Confirmation Service was held in July at St Paul Withington, again presided over by Bishop Mark.

The Area Dean is Revd Stephen Edwards, the Lay Chair is Jeff Dunkerley and Carys Pugh is the Secretary. The end of 2015 saw the retirement of Revd Greg Forster, the Treasurer, who served for more than 30 years as incumbent of St Wilfrid Northenden. A gift from the Synod with our thanks for his long and faithful service was presented at the November meeting. Revd Bill Raines was elected as the new Treasurer

Elections for Diocesan representatives on the General Synod were held in 2015. Diana Kloss and Steve Penny from our Deanery stood as representatives of the Laity but were unsuccessful. There was a disappointing turnout of electors at the hustings meetings and in the election itself, despite a presentation from Revd Bill Raines at the February meeting in which, as a former member, he explained the proceedings of the General Synod and exhorted members to stand for election and/or vote. Jeff Dunkerley and Diana Kloss were elected to Bishop's Council and Jeff Dunkerley, Diana Kloss, Steve Penny and Revd Stephen Edwards to Diocesan Synod.

At the end of the year there were clergy vacancies in three parishes: St Chad Ladybarn, St Wilfrid Northenden, and St John Brooklands. Revd Ian Fellows was appointed to St Luke Benchill in the Wythenshawe Team. The Deanery Plan is to reduce from 12.5 to 8 stipendiary posts for 12 parishes.

Revd Bill Raines spoke about the General Synod at the February meeting. The June meeting consisted of an open service of worship presided over by Bishop David after which he held a lively question and answer session. This was the culmination of a day's visit to the Deanery. At the November meeting a group of young people from the Diocese who had attended the confirmation camp in Tampere, Finland, spoke about their experiences and their faith journey. They were introduced by Susie Mapledoram, Diocesan Youth Officer. There was a discussion about strategies to encourage young people to join the church, an essential if the church is to survive.

Diana Kloss, Synod member from Christ Church and St Christopher