

Diocesan Synod 28 November 2020. Breakout Group: OSWALD

The general summery was

- Exciting
- Who do we learn from
- How do we help people adjust.

A more thorough summary follows.

What is the good news for you in this?

- Reduced loneliness for clergy/leaders and opportunity for people to play to their skills.
- Collaboration bringing creativity and energy
- Opportunities for discipleship beyond traditional lay roles.
- Opportunities for better quality ministry in various areas where some churches don't have enough people in certain categories (C&Y, Seekers, 20's&30's etc) but might be able to develop more appropriate ministry by joining together.
- Forces congregation to look outwards - looking at wider needs.
- Especially good for responding to new housing.
- Expression of the fact that we are all in this together

Where do you already see this happening?

- The group didn't really focus not his but wanted to learn about where this kind of model is already being used. Are there things to learn about success, pitfalls, missed opportunities from places like Carlisle and the RC diocese of Hexham?

What might you have to let go of?

- Traditional way of looking at the building as the church.
- Some structures - occasional office rules and parish boundaries.
- Freehold - how do we help people to engage. But how do we also ensure clergy wellbeing by not dismantling their security with new ways of working.
- Let go of all quantifying based on bums on seats and finances. Needs to see our impact as wider than this.
- How do we enable theological traditions to flourish and engage together, especially where some peoples ministry is not recognised and welcomed?
- How do we help people to adjust? Both clergy and congregations. Particularly with nuance around responsibility, leadership and accountability. (There are times now when clergy do try to enable lay ministry but then have to sweep up all the jobs that aren't done. They may find themselves being de facto treasurer or doing many of the CW / Secretarial jobs, and leading in areas of ministry where lay be could due to lay number/willingness/skills. This obviously would become an impossibly large undertaking for oversight ministers, and could turn clergy into administrators rather than ministers)
- Are deaneries really necessary in this new way of being, or are they an arcane structure that are an extra layer of meetings/admin that wouldn't be needed if we were working together in smaller clusters?