



Reigate Deanery Synod Meeting Minutes

Date:	Tuesday 3 March 2026, 7.30pm		
Venue:	Zoom Meeting		
Meeting Chair:	Rev Hannah Gordon (Assistant Area Dean) and Leslie Jackson		
Note Taker/Secretary:	Alexia Hartman (reigatedeanery@gmail.com)		
Attendees:	39	Apologies:	9

	ITEM	Action
1	Welcome & Opening Worship by Rev Hannah Gordon	
2	Review of Minutes of Reigate Deanery Synod Meeting held on Thursday 16 October 2025 at St Bartholomew's, Horley. Will be signed by Hannah as an accurate record of the meeting.	Hannah Gordon
3	<p>Deanery Updates (written reports):</p> <p><u>Diocesan Synod</u> Written report shared before meeting. Ruth was thanked for her report.</p> <p><u>Reigate Archdeaconry Social Justice Focus (RASJF)</u> If anyone has any questions or would like a talk on modern slavery please email Chris Elliot at rasocialjustice@gmail.com For further info on this and other RASJF work, visit: https://reigatedeanery.org.uk/rasjf Chris was thanked for his report</p> <p><u>Clergy Updates / Parishes in vacancy</u></p> <p>Vacancy - Vacancy for a Vicar at The Good Shepherd, Tadworth, is being advertised.</p> <p>Retirement Fr Jim Rosenthal from Christ the King, Salfords has retired. The meeting recorded its thanks to Fr Jim and wished him well in his retirement in Salisbury.</p> <p>Have your say on the next Bishop of Southwark An email has been circulated inviting responses from the wider community regarding the appointment of a new Bishop. It was noted that participation is open to everyone, not only Christians or churchgoers. A link to the questionnaire will be shared and responses may be submitted individually or as group responses. The questionnaire takes approximately five minutes to complete. In-person consultations will also be held in addition to the online process. https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=RAmOD-vo2EizUB8ag58jgqb4BKMZbvIDqBcxWo7qnL9UNk9LUEZUNVBXTVpQWkdCRkpUS1pUOVJaSy4u&route=shorturl</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ruth Inwood</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chris Elliot</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hannah Gordon</p>



4	<p>Quiet Day Saturday 28 March Location: St Margaret's, Chipstead Led by the Dean of Southwark, The Very Reverend Dr. Mark Oakley.</p> <p>There is still capacity for additional attendees. Those who received an invitation were encouraged to sign up. For further information or to register, please contact Alexia at reigatedeanery@gmail.com.</p>	Leslie Jackson
5	<p>Introduction to our theme</p>	Leslie Jackson
6	<p>Rachel Sanderson – Local GP Rachel is a GP in the East Surrey area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The majority of people living with dementia, including those in later stages, are not in care homes but are living within the community.- Dementia is an umbrella term for degenerative diseases of the brain, with Alzheimer's disease currently the most common form.- There is currently no cure for dementia and treatment options remain limited.- Dementia involves progressive degeneration of the brain, leading to memory loss and other difficulties, including loss of visual and spatial awareness.- While some memory decline may occur with ageing, most people should still be able to remember most things.- People living with dementia retain a sense of self and a need for dignity and respect.- The person remains the same individual they have always been, and often the last thing they lose is recognition of their own name.	
7	<p>SAGE (Southwark and AGEing) a Southwark Diocesan working group Lucia Sullivan Lucia is a retired Occupational Therapist who spoke about her experience working with older people, many living with dementia or memory loss.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lucia is a parishioner at St John's, Blackheath (Greenwich) - the first Dementia-Friendly Church.• Becoming dementia friendly does not require major changes and can also support a wide range of people with different disabilities or conditions.• A SAGE handout is available and a link will be shared after the meeting. https://www.southwark.anglican.org/sage If you have other questions about resources or work alongside older people, you are welcome to email SAGE@southwark.anglican.org https://southwark.anglican.org/mission-ministry/ministry/discipleship-ministry/discipleship/sage/• People with dementia may not remember what was said, but they will remember how they were made to feel. Ensuring people feel comfortable and respected is most important.• Simple measures such as clear facilities and accessibility can make a significant difference.• At St John's, a small team of trained volunteers support people with dementia and wear badges so they can be easily identified.• A quiet area is available for anyone who may feel overwhelmed, allowing them to step aside while still listening to the service.	



8	<p>Fiona Sterry Dementia Café</p> <p>Fiona runs the Dementia Café at St Mary's, Reigate. It has been running for 8 years and meets once a month, free of charge, for people with memory loss or dementia and their carers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The café provides support for carers as well. Carers often experience significant daily stress.- It offers a listening ear, particularly for people who have recently been told that a loved one has dementia.- Simple refreshments are provided, including tea, coffee and biscuits.- Activities include adult colouring, crafts and word searches, and are kept simple and tailored to individual interests.- Conversation is usually guest-led and can include topics such as Christmas traditions, family memories and sometimes end-of-life care. Sensitive topics are approached carefully to ensure the group is comfortable.- The aim is to provide a safe, welcoming space with no judgement and a high level of tolerance.- Managing unfamiliar behaviour can sometimes be challenging and may lead to difficult situations.- Safeguarding is important. Volunteers remain aware of potential issues affecting carers or attendees, including physical abuse, self-neglect, personal hygiene concerns, whether someone is fit to drive, or whether they can safely find their way home. Church safeguarding policies apply to the café.- Attendance can sometimes be low (for example 2–3 people), due to health issues, lack of sleep, or the unpredictable nature of dementia.- Financial pressures can also be significant, as care homes are expensive and day care can cost around £70–£80 per day. Some carers may need to stop working, and carers may also be managing their own health concerns. Family support can sometimes be limited, particularly in blended families.- Providing a listening ear was emphasised as extremely important.- The café was described as an important ministry for churches and never a waste of time, supporting both those who are unwell and those who care for them.	
9	<p>Questions to our panel</p> <p>Question to Rachel (GP) <i>What happens after an initial assessment for memory concerns?</i></p> <p>Response (Rachel):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If significant signs are present, further tests may include blood tests, referral to a memory clinic and brain scans.• People may then be linked with local support services such as Age UK, the Alzheimer's Society, dementia cafés and a dementia choir called Engaging Voices at All Saints, Merstham.• Support can also come through wellbeing coordinators and the frailty hub.• Healthy lifestyle factors are important, including stopping smoking, good diet and good sleep. Rachel highlighted the importance of "exercise, socialise and memorise". This can help slow progression.• Churches can play an important role in providing community support.	



	<p>Question to Fiona (Dementia Café) <i>How can churches run or support dementia cafés?</i></p> <p>Response (Fiona):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deanery could help circulate information so churches can connect and support one another, rather than each church running its own café. • Promoting the café within the community can help reach those who may benefit and encourage wider participation. <p>Horley Team has started a community allotment to support people who may be struggling, offering the opportunity to be part of a team.</p> <p>Music, rhythm, pitch and tone were highlighted as contributing positively to memory and the process of memorising.</p> <p>Rev Hannah Gordon closed the session with a prayer for those living with dementia.</p>	
10	<p>Deanery Synod Elections Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is the last meeting of the current triennium. The next meeting will be with the newly elected Synod. - Elections for Deanery Synod representatives will take place at the APCM, with numbers depending on the size of each church's electoral roll. - Clergy representatives remain the same, while lay representatives will be elected from 2026 for the next three years. - Current representatives were encouraged to consider whether to stand again or allow others the opportunity to serve, and to pray about this. - Future meetings are expected to include more themed discussions and opportunities for churches to work together across the deanery. - Examples included sharing initiatives. - A Freshers' Fair is planned for October, where organisations will be invited to attend and share information about their work. - This will help churches learn more about local initiatives, build connections within the community and support one another. - The aim is to share ideas, strengthen mission and ministry, and help churches across the deanery flourish and grow. - Deanery Synod representatives also form part of the wider Church governance structure, contributing to the electorate that chooses lay representatives to General Synod in the Diocese of Southwark. - The importance of encouraging people with vision, commitment and enthusiasm to stand was highlighted, including younger adults and people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. - Deanery Synod members become PCC members and play an important role in discussions that influence church policy and future growth. 	Hannah Gordon
	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>Vacancy in See Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruth Inwood asked attendees at the meeting to look out for a prayer bookmark and card based on the vows bishops take at their ordination service based on the Ordinal. • The process for appointing the next Bishop will take some considerable time. <p>Sharing Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hilary Richardson spoke about sharing resources and connecting toddler group (1277 Group links toddler groups) leaders across churches. • Churches were encouraged to share links and support one another. 	Hilary Richardson



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• June is the National Month of Prayer for Toddler Groups.• Toddler group leaders were encouraged to take part this year and to give advance notice within their churches.• Churches could support one another through prayer and by sharing ideas and resources.• Hilary will email Alexia with further information to share. <p>Rev Kerry Jane Evans from the Horley Team asked for a list of dementia cafés in the area to be shared with Alexia so it can be compiled and circulated.</p> <p>Rev Hannah thanked everyone for their time as Deanery Synod Members.</p> <p>Rev Hannah also shared a prayer for the appointment of the next Bishop.</p>	Kerry Jane Evans / Alexia
8	Closing Worship	Hannah Gordon
8	<i>Dates of Future Meetings in 2026</i> Wednesday 1st July 2026 - St Mark's, Reigate at 7.30pm Thursday 15th October 2026 – St Mary's, Reigate	