

# The Parish Church of St. John the Baptist, Wickhamford

## Deanery Synod Report 2021

2021 saw the restructuring of the Deanery Synods. The benefice of Broadway and Wickhamford is now part of the Pershore and Evesham Deanery.

The Deanery Synod representative for St John the Baptist Church attended the following meetings in 2021:

**9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 by Zoom** – this was the inaugural meeting of the Pershore and Evesham Deanery Synod with Sarah Dangerfield who was commissioned as Dean for a 3 year term by Bishop Martin.

Sarah spoke about the purpose of the Deaneries – to provide mutually supportive relationships; to conduct effective mission planning; to serve and transform communities.

A film was shown, followed by virtual group discussions to consider the future aims of the church.

**20<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at All Saints Church, Evesham** – the main aim of the meeting was to reflect on the way ahead through group discussions and plenary sessions. The main conclusions were:

- It was a mistake to close churches during lockdown.
- We need less bureaucracy in the CofE.
- We need a better, faster way to cascade information down through the Synods, and, by extension, back up from grass roots.
- Community support and contact is essential.
- The church needs to go out to people, not expect them to come to us.
- Local congregations should be encouraged to visit other churches to worship.
- The offer of services should widen, not narrow, including the pattern of services.
- We should make full use of social media/ electronic resources.

**12<sup>th</sup> October 2021** – by Zoom.

Judy Dale from Pershore Abbey gave a presentation on the concept of Eco Church or ‘caring for God’s earth’. Using the guidance of the Christian charity A Rocha and under the principle of ‘every little helps’ Pershore achieved a Bronze Award by working in the following areas:

- *Worship and Teaching*: used events such as the Harvest Festival to promote Eco subjects; spread the word by giving presentations like this one.
- *Buildings*: examined heating to identify a more sustainable system; solar panels on roof.
- *Land*: growing insect encouraging plants; growing courgettes and tomatoes on church ground; planting bulbs; putting up nesting boxes.

- *Community & Global*: litter picks; church twinning; toilet twinning with 3<sup>rd</sup> world; using Fair Trade.
- *Lifestyle*: encouraging congregation to eat less meat and more veg; using water butts.

In November the Benefice welcomed Bishop Martin on a pilgrimage of prayer to the Deanery. Bishop Martin visited St Michael's in Broadway, blessed the doorway and conducted a short service.

In conclusion, it has been agreed that meeting in person, rather than by Zoom, is a much more valuable experience and promotes more dialogue. It is hoped that this will be possible for future Synod meetings.

Jackie Knight

Deanery Synod Representative