

Deanery Synod Annual Report 2025

Rural Dean: Revd Christopher Bunce; **Deputy Rural Deans:** Revd Maxine Howarth and Revd Jenni McQuaid; **Lay Chair:** Neil Greatorex; **Treasurer:** Alison Collis; **Deanery Synod Secretary:** Elizabeth Cranfield; **Deanery eco representative:** Revd Mary de Salis

Revd Bill Britt stood down as Rural Dean in April and was succeeded by Revd Christopher Bunce, previously Deputy Rural Dean. Revd Maxine Howarth and Revd Jenni McQuaid were appointed as the new Deputy Rural Deans.

There were five Deanery Synod meetings in 2025.

6th Feb 2025 at St Mary's, Hitchin: David White, Diocesan Secretary, gave an interesting talk on the process for selecting a new Bishop. There were a number of similarities with selecting a new vicar, and differences in that there are a number of bodies within Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire that are consulted. The process is long.

28th April 2025 at St George's, Norton: Rev Nick Smith, Diocesan Church Growth Officer for Bedfordshire, spoke on the use and benefits of developing a MAP, allowing, amongst other things, a church to define its direction and how this would be achieved.

1st July 2025 at St Ippolyts: There was no open meeting at this synod. As this was the first synod with Revd Chris Bunce as Rural Dean, he and Neil Greatorex gave a joint presentation on what a deanery and a deanery synod are and how they fit into the diocese structure. Synod members then discussed, in small groups, how we move forward to make Hitchin Deanery Synod more exciting and relevant to the needs of the constituent Parishes.

24th September 2025, Holy Saviour, Hitchin: There was no open meeting at this synod. Instead, members of synod got to know one another through a 'speed dating' exercise.

4th December 2025, St Mark's, Hitchin: Joseph Davies from Ecclesiastical Insurance gave a very informative presentation, giving details on the various types of support for churches on the company's website. They are also happy to provide presentations on a number of topics.

At each synod meeting various churches gave good news stories from their parish.

During the year:

Canon Stephen Fielding, Revd Amanda Ferris, Revd Melanie Crowley retired

Revd Katy Little was Installed and Inducted as Rector of King's Walden and Offley with Lilley

Revd Emma-Jane Wilkinson was appointed as Vicar of King Charles the Martyr, Potters Bar

Revd Gail Adcock was licenced as curate in charge at St Mary's, Old Letchworth and All Saints', Willian

Revd Ian Todd, Revd Mary De Salis, Revd Ginni Dear and Revd Jenni McQuaid took sabbaticals

Adrian Grove was licensed as a Reader for St Mark's, Hitchin

Dates for Deanery Synod meetings in 2026:

- 9th February 2026, St Mary Magdalene, Great Offley - Topic: Diocesan Strategy for Ministry
- 14th April 2026, St Ippolyts – Topic: Diocesan Board of Finance
- 24th June 2026, St Mary the Virgin, Stotfold – Topic: Changes to the structure of Mothers' Union
- 24th September 2026, St Katharine's, Ickleford – Topic: Needham House and supporting asylum seekers locally TBC
- 1st December 2026, St George's, Norton – Topic: TBD

Elizabeth Cranfield

Deanery Synod Secretary