

## Unapproved Minutes

### **Minutes of the St John's Church Annual Vestry Meeting Held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2008 at 7.30pm in St John's Church.**

The meeting was chaired by the Rector James Dudley-Smith.

60 church members were present and a list is filed with these minutes

1. James opened the meeting with a bible reading from Ephesians 4:10-13, likening the church to a hospital (where spiritual sickness finds healing in the gospel), a job centre (where God's people are enabled to do works of service for him and one another), and a building site (which is messy but constantly changing and growing).
2. **Minutes**  
The Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> April 2007 had been displayed in the church and were accepted without amendment by the meeting and signed by James as a true record. There were no matters arising.
3. **Churchwardens**  
There were 2 nominations for churchwarden, Ros Bush and Keith Ovenden. The secretary pointed out the Keith had been a warden for 6 years and under current rules should stand down, however James had specifically requested that he be allowed to stand for another year and this was agreed by the meeting. Both Ros Bush and Keith Ovenden were duly elected.

### **Minutes of the St John's Church Annual Church Meeting Held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2008 at 7.30pm in St John's Schoolrooms.**

The meeting was chaired by the Rector James Dudley-Smith.

60 church members were present and a list is filed with these minutes

1. **Minutes**  
The Minutes of the Annual Church Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> April 2007 were accepted without amendment by the meeting and signed by James as a true record. There were no matters arising.
2. **Consideration of the Electoral Roll of St John the Baptist Church**  
In the absence of the Electoral Roll officer, Kath Upton, due to illness the secretary reported that the number on the electoral roll was 191, compared with 189 last year.
3. **Report on the Church Council and PCC**  
The Secretary referred to the report included in the St. John's Annual report which is filed with these minutes. The Church Council and the PCC had both met on 4 occasions during the year. At the first meeting of the PCC the parish baptism policy was discussed which resulted in a leaflet being produced which is given to all parents considering baptism for their child. This offers two kinds of service. A service of thanksgiving and dedication which recognises God as creator and a service of baptism recognising God as saviour. The possibility of appointing a Parish Youth Worker was considered at our meeting in May and has been discussed further at subsequent meetings. In order for this to become a reality we will need to raise at least £25,000 per year. Fire risk assessments have been carried out at both churches and church halls and there are written instruction covering fire safety

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procedures. In addition a training day on fire safety procedures was held on 12th January 2008 which was attended by about 30 members of both churches. At our meeting in October we received a presentation from Revd David Keen, the Deanery Missioner on the future housing developments on the outskirts of Yeovil and the implications that these would have for the churches in Yeovil. David was invited back to a Sunday morning service at St. John's to address the wider church membership. Further details of the proposals are covered in the Deanery Synod report.

At the Church Council meetings the question of the position of the pulpit and frontals for the choir seating have been discussed at length but no decisions have been made. The main reasons being that we did not want to make a decision until the review of Sunday morning worship had been completed.

The quinquennial survey on the state of the church building was received and discussed. A report on this is included in the St. John's Fabric report.

The meeting held in January 2008 was devoted to discussing the future patterns of worship on Sunday mornings at St. Johns. This followed much discussion amongst the members of the congregation and many written comments given to the rector beforehand and a day of prayer. The outcome of the meeting is that one Eucharistic service currently led by the choir each month will be led by the music group and there will be an evensong each month which will be led by the choir. A small group is to oversee future changes to Sunday morning services.

David Poole asked about the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday service and whether it would be a choir led service. In reply James said the no decisions had been made to change the format of the service but there may be changes as there were at last week's service when Harry Dudley Smith was baptised and there was no choir. James pointed out that nothing is set in stone and that we are at liberty to make changes.

Colin Dore raised the issue of the title of services particularly "Together for Worship" which could have several interpretations. James agreed that it was important that people should have some idea of the sort of service to expect and that there should be some consistency in the services. He pointed out that Together for Worship was not a children's service but more an all age service. If people wanted to see a children's service then they should come to the Children's service at 4pm on Christmas Eve.

John Mitchell raised the point that some parents may like the opportunity to bring children to a service not specifically catering for children to which James replied that this may be the case but might not be appropriate on a regular basis.

#### **4. Annual Report on the Financial Affairs of St John's Church, including the Independently Examined Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2007**

A full finance report is included in the annual report together with the official signed accounts filed with these minutes.

With the aid of an overhead projector Martin Warr went through the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 and made the following points.

- a) This year, thanks to some significant gift-aided donations towards the end of the year we have not only funded our operating costs and achieved a surplus of £4,973 but have also cleared the cumulative deficit on the General Fund which now has a positive balance of £3,049.
- b) The use of the Gift Aid facility has again proved its worth, yielding tax recoveries of £20,494. The Chancellor has agreed to continue to repay tax based on 22% for a 3 year period which gives us time to increase our income to cover the reduced tax recovery, inflation, and new expenditure such as a full time youth worker which is likely to cost £25,000 per annum and require

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- an increase in our income of 25%.
- c) The results for the year benefited from a retrospective VAT recovery on our gas bills due to the reduction in VAT rate from 17 ½% to 5%.
  - d) We have given away £11,000 for Missionary and Charitable causes which was just under our 10% target but we will seek to make up some of this shortfall in 2008.
  - e) The Schoolrooms operated at a surplus of £1,932 as against last year's deficit of (£1,103). Letting income increased by £1,500 as the W.I. Market is now in full swing. There is still a need for all of us to promote the schoolrooms as a venue for meetings.
  - f) The Fabric fund bears the main non recurring costs of the church and in particular the costs of the re-ordering project which have cumulatively cost over £172,000 but we have only needed to draw down £59,848 from the fabric funds, as the rest has been paid for out of fund raising.
  - g) The Organ Fund has a balance of £7,817 which will be spent on future proofing the organ during the next couple of years.
  - h) The total funds of the church amount to £284,000 of which £266,000 is invested with the Church Commissioners and currently earning about 6%. Included within our funds are Reserved funds, namely the Restoration Appeal Fund and the Tom Setter Belfry Fund amounting to £178,000 and Designated funds mainly Fabric, Organ and Schoolrooms funds amounting to £102,000.
  - i) The budget for 2008 indicates income of £117,600 which may be a little pessimistic and expenditure of £120,000 giving a deficit of up to £3,000.
  - j) The schedule at the back of the annual report gives details of the Missionary and Charitable causes which we support. The philosophy that we are using is that we support fewer charities but concentrate in those where we can make a real difference.
  - k) In summing up Martin said that we have achieved our objective in paying for the re-ordering without draining our resources. We have eliminated the deficit on our General Fund and there were signs that our congregation is increasing and we have some money put by for when the tower needs repairing.

James thanked Martin for all his hard work during the year and for keeping us on track and for his cautious and wise treasurership.

### **5. Report upon the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of St John's Church, including the confirmation and maintenance of the Log Book.**

Keith Ovenden apologised for the fact that he had not verified the silver in the safe but promised to do it shortly. However he confirmed that Martin had inspected the silver contained in a safe deposit box held at the Midland Bank.

He referred to the Fabric report that Roger Fox had included in the annual report and thanked him for his continuing hard work in connection with the fabric of the church. Roger said that it was important that those who leave the church ensure that it is left secure as there were occasions when doors had been left insecure. Keith also mentioned that we all need to be on the lookout for signs of vandalism around the church and he was shortly having a meeting with the Town Centre Security Manager and the Town Centre Manager to discuss these issues.

### **6. Report on proceedings of the Deanery Synod**

Colin Reston reported that there have been 3 meetings during the year since our last AGM.

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The first meeting was held at Rimpleton Village Hall, on 16 May 2007, in which the speaker was Revd David Keen (Deanery Missioner) who gave an interesting talk on Local Ministry Groups and "Fresh Expressions" and also the proposed housing developments on the outskirts of Yeovil. It was noted that no new churches were planned on these estates but activities would be held within community centres. There were funds available for these areas and they should be used.

The next meeting was on 18 October 2007 in St. John's Schoolrooms when the Yeovil District Hospital Chaplain (Rev John Rothwell) gave a very interesting talk on his work and touched on many issues e.g.

A Multi faith working environment noted in the hospital with 78% of patients stating that they were Christians.

At least 29 different nationalities in YDH with more Muslims now in evidence.

Confidentiality an important part of John's work.

Consent to spiritual care as important as ordinary care.

Support needed for patients regarding the death of newly born babies or abortions.

The Yeovil Cemetery in Preston Road caters for the burial of tissue after death and a pergola for remembrance for aborted babies has been erected.

The Christian think tank THEOS has last October accused health trusts of making drastic cuts to hospital chaplaincy posts with serious implications for the care of patients. Chaplaincy care has been reduced by over 54,000 hours a year since 2005. And when it questioned 198 NHS trusts in England it found almost a quarter had made major cuts.

Trusts are clearly under serious financial pressure and have sought to introduce Chaplaincy targets such as bleeper response times of 1 hour maximum callout time and other proofs maybe needed that chaplaincy is good value for money. John quite rightly pointed out that love and friendship are not measurable but in fact they are priceless! Research has shown that there is a positive improvement in patient care when good spiritual care is available.

Volunteers are needed to assist at Sunday services at YDH and also visiting patients on Sundays and during the week to have chats with the people in hospital who need a friendly ear.

The Rural Dean advised PCC's to be encouraged to call on volunteers to help out on this important work.

The last meeting at St. James's Church hall (Preston Plucknett) was held on 7 February 2008.

A DVD presentation by Bill Hybels, a respected American church leader who gave an impassioned talk on church growth and set out various ways in which this could happen. He expanded on several themes under the headings of :-

Ownership of a vision being essential

What does God want our church to look like in five years time

People do not need to have their way, but their way considered

In the "process" of change it is essential to engage everyone.

A discussion then took place in small groups to explore – Bill Hybels great qualities – what does God want our church to look like in 5 years time and do we own a vision?

Colin Dore asked what contact there was with other faith groups in the town to which James replied that he had attended a meeting between church leaders and Muslim leaders in the local Mosque. There had been no further developments but a dialogue had been established.

### **7. Comments on other Reports**

Roger Fox asked whether there were any other questions arising out of the Annual

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Report but there were none.

### 8. **Election of 2 Deputy Wardens for St John the Baptist Church**

There were 2 nominations for 2 positions of Deputy Warden. Those nominated were Jennifer Matthew and Colin Reston and they were duly elected.

### 9. **Election of 2 members to serve on the Deanery Synod for 3 years**

There were 2 nominations for the Deanery Synod, Colin Reston and Roy Penny and both were duly elected.

### 10. **Election of 4 Members to St John's Church Council**

There were 3 nominations for the church council namely Ian Croxford, Roger Fox and Anne Wicks who were all duly elected.

### 11. **To accept the Warden's List of Sidespersons for St John's Church**

The secretary reported that he had received a list of sidespersons which contained 19 names which was 1 more than last year. He said that it was an important and rewarding job and if anyone wished to volunteer they should talk to Ros Bush. The list was accepted.

### 12. **Appointment of the Independent Examiner for 2008**

The secretary proposed that Mike Streatfeild's firm, who had examined the accounts for 2007, be reappointed for 2008. Martin confirmed that Mike's firm was willing to continue and this was unanimously accepted. Thanks were expressed for his work.

### 13. **Rectors Comments**

A full copy of James's comments are attached to these minutes. However he opened his comments by saying that he truly thanks God for being here as Rector of Yeovil. Despite there being sadnesses in the last year there is much to be thankful for the great blessings that God has given.

There were eight points made by James:

**First, Events for the Church family.** There have been a number of fantastic social events such as the Holiday Club barbeque. This year there is the church weekend away planned for September when Ian Barclay has been invited to lead us. He is an excellent speaker and has a charming wife.

**Second, Mission Support.** This year we have had the visit of Charlie Thomas who is our link to the Kitwe Kids project in Zambia, and we had a full weekend visit from the whole family of Lentons who pastor a church in Buenos Aires, and we have also had a visit from Geoff Kimber who with Gill has been in Romania. James referred to his visit to Lambeth Palace to discuss "future church leadership and the role of bishops".

There is the Lambeth Conference later in the year when we need to pray for all those who are seeking to hold to the truth of the gospel, and to biblical standards in sexuality as in all areas of human life.

**Third, Serving the town of Yeovil.** We have again hosted a number of Civic Services including Remembrance Sunday and a service celebrating the freedom of the town given to RNAS Yeovilton some years ago. We have held a flower festival and tower open day, we had Paddy Ashdown to speak to the 'Friends' and David Keen encouraging us to consider how the churches together can provide appropriate witness to Christ, in the new developments which are due to be built around the edge of town.

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**Fourth, Staff.** James said that it feels slightly unfair to lose our administrator and our Director of Music so soon after his arrival. Job adverts are out, and please pray for the right person to take over and for our music ministry to continue to develop.

Kath has taken over as administrator and he has every confidence in her. Thanks are due to Bob Banfield and also to the wardens, Readers, and Ed Bangay, Brian Adams, to PCC members and to all who play their part in one ministry or another.

**Fifth, Morning Services.** At the PCC away day last June, we agreed that we have certain areas of strength: work with young people, prayer, pastoral work, Hunger for God, resources, and gifted people. One outcome was the desire to look at the format of the Sunday morning services and as a result there will be some changes starting next month. The service on the 4th Sunday currently led by the choir will be led by the music group. There will be other changes over time but they will be evolutionary rather than revolutionary and we continue to pray that the choir and music group will continue to develop and grow.

**Sixth, Learning the faith.** James said that his heart burns for this and his principal task in any week is the sermon. We should take every opportunity to read and never stop learning about the scriptures. We shall soon be hosting an evening here with Dr Chris Wright who is another internationally renowned bible teacher, former missionary, former principal of All Nations Christian College, and he will be considering the place of Christian faith alongside other faiths; I'm sure it will be a mind-stretching evening.

**Seventh is evangelism and outreach.** Who remembers Arthur? James introduced him at last year's AGM. He was an imaginary non-Christian with a wife and kids, who came to faith through the ministry of St. John's, grew to mature faith through our work, serving Christ and his church. Has anyone come to a new and real faith in Christ through St. John's during these last 12 months? That is the question that we should be asking ourselves. How can we draw people to Jesus and introduce them to him so that they may live their lives here and hereafter in relationship with God?

**Finally, Youth work.** Or to be more specific – what about a youth worker! This is something the PCC have discussed at some length. We may be able to get some financial help from the Diocese but if it is to happen we need to start planning and a likely timetable might be:

May – we shall begin informing the church properly about the aims and implications of this.

September – a major prayer focus for this project.

October – a pledge day, in which we hope that you will be able to support this by making financial commitments and pledges.

In January 09 – we shall finalise the job description, adverts and paperwork

February – Advertise

April – Interview

September – if God sends the money, the opportunity, and the right person, this we hope might be their start date.

I wonder if this excites you as much as it does me. Or do you think we are naively aiming for the impossible. I don't think so. In this and in every area of our church life, let's be prayerful, be bold, be generous, be faithful – for the glory of God and for the future of our church.

14. There being no further business James closed the meeting with a prayer and the meeting finished at 9.25pm.