

Minutes of a Meeting of the St John's Church Council held on Tuesday 15th September 2009, in the Schoolrooms

The following council members were present:

Bob Banfield, John Brookes, Ros Bush, Nick Chatwin, Simon Corner. Ian Croxford, Roger Fox, Alan Irwin, Linda Keyworth, Jennifer Matthew, Joy Neville, Keith Ovenden, Roy Penny, Colin Reston, Paula Rollason, Jenny Salberg, David Upton, Anne Wicks,
Chairman: James Dudley-Smith

1. James welcomed Simon to the meeting and looked forward to many happy church council meetings.

2. Opening worship

James opened with prayer and a reading from 1 Peter chapter 2 verses 9 to 12. "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us."

This passage highlights the tremendous privileges that God gives to us, His church, and it is only the mercy of God that creates the church. It highlights the problems that are involved in church life. We have sin from within and misunderstandings from without. James then read an extract from a book called "The House that Jesus Built" by Dale Ralph Davis in which the author sets out to new worshippers what the church is, both good and bad, and in some respects St. John's church is like that.

3. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Phil Juggins and Kath Upton

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 19th May were approved without amendment.

5. Matters Arising

a) Make up of the sub committees

The Youth committee remains the same with Simon Corner joining it. Phil Juggins is joining the BYG committee representing Christian Aid. Pauline Kibblewhite and Jenny Salberg have joined the Schoolrooms committee. James thanked Keith Ovenden, Colin Reston, and Roy Penny for their service on the Finance Committee and Anne Wicks and Jennifer Matthew as chairperson who have joined the committee. The Social Committee comprises, Jenny Salberg, Gil Ovenden, Ros Chatwin and Francis Croxford. The Pastoral Group which has not changed are meeting in church at 10am on the 1st Thursday of each month to pray for pastoral issues.

b) Constitution of the LEP

James referred to a sheet which he handed out which detailed the old constitution and the suggested new one which had been accepted by the leaders of the LEP. James asked us to let him know if we had any comments which we

wanted him to feedback to the other LEP ministers. Jenny asked who represented St. John's on the leadership committee now that Alison had left. Apart from Chris Salberg who was currently working away from home there was no one else and James asked us to let him know if any of us were interested.

6. Correspondence

Transport

The secretary read out a letter from Harold Cargill asking if we would consider setting up a transport pool for anyone who had difficulty getting to church. This was agreed in principal and Anne Wickes agreed to act as coordinator. An appeal for people willing to provide transport would be put in the magazine and on the notices.

7. Finance Report

The secretary referred to the minutes of a meeting held on 11th August. However updated figures have been received up to the end of August which are as follows: General Fund deficit (£2,175) versus a budget of (£1,258) and a full-year budget of (£2,159). Income is down £3,000 (3.5%), Expenditure is down £2,100 (2.5%). Of budget. The main income shortfall is on casual giving (Church plate and Gift Aided) (£1,750) but pledged giving is also £1,000 less than anticipated. We have 'lost' one or two givers.

The Schoolrooms deficit is £336 after spending £5,154 on the stair lift of which £3,729 was covered by donations.

The Youth Minister fund stands at £26,500 before any contribution from the Diocese. A policy was agreed to approve unbudgeted expenditure over £250 in which the rector and wardens will consider whether the expenditure is necessary and the treasurer whether we have the funds available.

The list of persons counting and banking the weekly collections was approved.

The need to plan for a successor to the treasurer was discussed but nobody was immediately identified as a possibility. However we need to be on the look out for a suitable person.

8. Fabric

External Repairs and Fencing off of the tower

The Ecclesiastical Insurance Company have said that we must fence off the tower from the north door around the tower to the south door with a 2 metre high fence 3 metres from the tower, within the next 6 months. The Diocese have approved the fence but as this is likely to be in-situ for more than 2 years we will need planning permission from South Somerset District Council who do not like the type of fencing that has been proposed. It was agreed that with the SSDC's approval we would erect a temporary fence which we would rent initially but with an option for purchase. Keith Ovenden volunteered to get a team together to erect the fence.

New Lighting Scheme

Roger Fox showed some slides of lighting which had been installed in Crewkerne church and which he thought would be suitable for St. John's. After some discussion it was agreed that he seeks the approval of the DAC at their next meeting at the beginning of October.

Suspended Font Cover

Following the Finance Committee's recommendation that, due to the high cost of an annual inspection as requested by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company we should

remove the font cove, Jennifer had sought the approval of the DAC. The response from the DAC was that whilst they were sympathetic regarding the cost of an annual inspection they thought that we should retain it as there are not many similar covers in existence. They suggested that it should be retained but instead of being suspended by a pulley it is fixed with a permanent steel wire. It was agreed to see if the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company would be happy with this arrangement and find out if an annual inspection would no longer be necessary.

9. Review of Church Services

A small sub committee had met on 2 occasions to discuss the pattern of services and a copy of their report was handed out. A number of comments had been received and as expected there had been some for the changes and some against. Probably those who were against the changes have left St. John's and others do not attend the services that they do not like. In view of the size of the congregation and the number of comments received it must be assumed that most people feel that the services are OK. However concern was expressed about the choir and it was felt that without an increase in numbers it was likely to fold. It was suggested that one of the reasons for the low numbers could be that people did not join the choir because they do not like the sort of music being sung. It was hoped that Ray would run a choral workshop for the choir and anyone in the congregation interested in attending and perhaps we need to guide him in this direction. There was also the feeling that our patterns of services are too varied and some, particularly new people, were put off by this. In summing up James said that the review has taken place and we are not reversing the changes already made but we need to work hard and pray hard in deciding how we move forward.

10. Parish Youth Work

With Simon's arrival the various groups supporting youth work will continue with Simon's involvement. The small group set up to plan for the appointment, minus James, would continue and act as a support group for Simon. David Upton would ask Kenneth Lamb to review his contract of employment. The Diocese have agreed funding of £15k over 3 years, £6k in the first year, £5k in the second year and £4k in the third year.

11. PCC Away Day on 26th September

St. Andrews' have for various reasons opted out of the away day. The arrangements for those attending are that we will leave Yeovil at 9am for St. John's church in Wimborne and aim to return by 5pm. We will use their church hall and their vicar Richard Tulloch would give a short talk on growing a church at which they have been quite successful. James took a list of those willing to offer transport and those requiring lifts and will liaise with drivers. It was agreed to have a fish and chip lunch which James would arrange.

12. Any other business

a) Request for Financial Support for the Oddments Theatre Company

Barry Boynton was now working nearly full time for the theatre company and they are seeking to expand their outreach to schools, churches and prisons and have asked us for our financial support. It was agreed to support them and they would be added to the list of missions and charities that we support annually which would be allocated by the Finance committee in November.

b) Burglaries in Churches

The crime prevention officer has visited the church and has sent a report with several recommendations. Also the Diocese has reported that there have been a number of burglaries in churches. It was agreed to put this item on the next agenda and we all need to be vigilant when in church for any suspicious persons.

c) Social events

Jenny said that the social committee were organising a bangers and mash evening on 31st October. On 10th October the Lord's Larder were organising a barn dance and harvest supper. In view of these events and the Michael Eavis talk on 22nd October there would not be a St. John's harvest supper this year.

There being no further business James closed the meeting with a prayer at 10pm

Date of Next Meeting – 17th November