

Minutes of a Meeting of the St John's Church Council held on Tuesday 17th November 2009, in the Schoolrooms

The following council members were present:

Bob Banfield, John Brookes, Ros Bush, Nick Chatwin, Simon Corner, Roger Fox,
Phil Juggins, Linda Keyworth, Jennifer Matthew, Joy Neville, Keith Ovenden, Colin Reston,
Paula Rollason, Jenny Salberg, David Upton, Martin Warr, Anne Wicks,
Chairman: James Dudley-Smith

1. Opening worship

James opened with prayer and spoke about the book of Daniel following a clergy conference which he had attended. The book of Daniel can be divided into 2 halves and both halves deal with resurrection. The first half leads up to Daniel's resurrection and the second half, which is almost apocalyptic, deals with the resurrection to come. The last verse of chapter 12 says "As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance." The rest used in this context is the re-establishment of our relationship with God, being at peace with God. But for us there is a resurrection that comes before the resurrection because we rise with new life with Christ now. As believers we lead a risen life.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Ian Croxford, Keith Stevens, Kath Upton, Alan Irwin

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

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

5. Matters Arising

a) Minutes on the web site

The secretary confirmed that the PCC and Church Council minutes were on the church web site. Minutes unapproved were being shown as such. It was agreed that certain sensitive items, such as church security would be excluded.

b) Transport

There had been no response to our request for volunteers to offer transport. A further request is being put on this week's notices. Harold Cargill is now being given a lift to church.

6. Correspondence

None

7. Finance Report

Martin reported on the latest accounts to the end of October. These did not show a very good position as our income was down compared with budget by nearly £4,700, however our expenditure was down by £2,580 and the net result was a deficit of £3,820 which was £1,795 worse than budget. This means that we are cumulative in deficit by £2,000. Also our Diocesan quota will go up next year by over 5% to £75,000. In view of this Martin said that unless our income improved by the year end including Christmas he was budgeting to reduce our giving to charitable and missionary causes by £2,000 to £9,000. This goes against the policy of the PCC to give 10% of our income. He said that he would balance the books but was not prepared to go into a cumulative deficit meaning that we were using money from our fabric and other funds to finance general

running costs. Keith Ovenden suggested that perhaps we need to look to see if some of the other funds held by church groups were in excess of their needs. Martin said that these were very small and would not produce much. Joy Neville said that she was uncomfortable that our charitable giving was the last call on our expenditure rather than the first. It was suggested that we withhold part of the diocesan quota in order to balance our books rather than reduce our charitable giving. James explained that the reason for the higher percentage increase in the Diocesan quota was that the Diocese was trying to reduce the amount taken out of their reserves. Martin suggested that if it was the Church Council's wish he would write to the Diocese to explain that in order to meet out tithing commitment and other expenditure without going into deficit we cannot pay the full quota. Roger Fox said how difficult it was to get new people to commit themselves to planned giving. Also other churches raise money from fetes and similar events which perhaps we should consider. We must also bear in mind that many members of the congregation have increased their giving significantly to fund the youth minister fund. It was agreed that we should tell the congregation that the church is running into a deficit position without giving reasons or mentioning that we may have to reduce our charitable giving. The form of the communication would be discussed and agreed at the Finance Committee meeting next Tuesday.

8. Fabric

New Lighting Scheme

The Council received a report from Roger Fox stating that the DAC had favourably received our suggestions detailed at the last meeting, and invited us to submit a formal application. The independent assessor for the project did however ask how we proposed to arrange access for cleaning and maintenance because the lights would be higher than the existing ones. He also sought assurances that the colour rendering on the Hamstone columns would be acceptable, and that we avoid as far as possible the placing of spotlights within the fluting of the columns.

Roger met the assessor at Crewkerne St Bartholomew's last week as the lights we selected are installed there and the building is very similar. The assessor was satisfied with what he saw there and he was assured we would take on the points raised in preparing the final specification.

It is hoped that our Architect will now be able to submit the "formal advice" application specification in time for the DAC meeting on 16th December 2009. Assuming the DAC will be happy with this we shall then be required to petition the Consistory Court of the Diocese for a faculty. A resolution from this Council will be required for this and the following resolution was proposed by Roger and seconded by David Upton and all were in favour.

Resolved:

" That the Rector and Churchwardens petition the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Bath and Wells for a Faculty to install new lighting in St John's in accordance with the specification prepared by the Architect, John Beauchamp, in November 2009."

Thanks were expressed to Roger for all his work.

The Tower

Thanks were expressed to those who had helped erect the fencing around the tower.

Roger said that he would be shortly meeting the architect and a quantity surveyor at the

church to discuss what work needs to be done and to estimate the likely cost.

Suspended Font Cover

Jennifer Matthew confirmed that the Ecclesiastical Insurance company were happy with our proposal to suspend the font cover permanently by a wire rope provided that it was inspected as part of the quinquennial survey. An initial survey would be carried out under the direction of Phil Juggins to make sure that the roof could support the cover.

8. Arrangements for services during the redecoration

It was confirmed that the church would be closed for at least 2 months while the redecoration was carried out. Arrangements will be made for directing people wishing to pray to another church. Martin mentioned that we will lose casual income whilst the church is closed.

Venue for the creche

It was agreed that for the 1st and 5th Sunday services the crèche should be in the church. The preferred place was in the gallery as it was close to the toilet however when the gallery had been used there were complaints about the level of noise at the back of the church particularly from children playing with metal toys. It was suggested that additional carpeting was required and that only soft toys should be used. The south transept was an alternative but ideally it should be screened off with a moveable soundproofed screen or fixed glass screen. However the lack of toilets close by was a problem.

9 Parish Youth Work

Simon mentioned the Tradecraft evening on Friday 20th November in the schoolrooms when the youth group would be providing entertainment and refreshments and there would be an opportunity to purchase Tradecraft products for Christmas.

10. PCC Away Day follow-up

a) Non- threatening events for non-Christians

James mentioned the day conference “Christianity for Men” that he had attended at the Gateway which particularly focused on ways to engage men within the church. Four levels of engagement had been identified from the purely social event such as Foam and Fellowship to the more structured outreach such as a Men’s breakfast and Christianity Explored Course. Roger mentioned that the Church of England Men’s Society which had in the past been very active in the parish had provided an opportunity to engage men. Also he mentioned a forthcoming bell ring when visiting ringers would be ringing the bells on a Saturday and we could invite people to watch or view the bell chamber on CCTV.

b) Mission Statement/strapline

It was agreed that it was a good idea to review our Mission Statement and James agreed to make some suggestions.

11. Meeting dates for 2010

The list of dates had been prepared and would be distributed to members of the council by e-mail.

12. An invitation from the Pope

James mentioned that the Pope had issued an invitation to any ordained members of the Anglican Church who were unhappy with the ordination of women and particularly the proposed ordination of women Bishops to become priests within the Roman Catholic Church while retaining certain elements of Anglican tradition. The exact details had not been made known but 600 ordained clergy from the Anglican church has met to discuss the position. James particularly mentioned his previous Diocese of Chichester where all 3 bishops had not ordained women and the Bishop of Chichester had attended the meeting to discuss the Papal invitation.

13. Forthcoming Events

a) Christmas Services

James distributed a copy of the Christmas card to be distributed within the parish.

b) Christianity Explored

The current course which has been attended by 40 people was due to finish in a fortnight had been much appreciated and enjoyed. A new course is due to start on 18th January and is being well publicised including on the cover of the carol service hymn sheets.

c) St Andrew's Day Services

We were reminded that all morning services on 29th November would be at St. Andrew's to celebrate their 75th birthday. There will be 2 identical communion services commencing at 9.15am and 11am with coffee in between.

14. Any Other Business

Martin mentioned that a new second hand piano had been purchased for the vestry and the vestry piano moved to the schoolrooms. The old schoolrooms piano was surplus and awaiting disposal. In view of its condition it was not considered to be worth anything.

James finished the meeting with prayer at 9.40pm

Date of Next Meeting – 2nd February 2010