

Minutes of a Meeting of the St John's Church Council held on Tuesday 19th May 2009, in the Schoolrooms

The following council members were present:

John Brookes, Ros Bush, Ian Croxford, Roger Fox, Alan Irwin, Phil Juggins,
Linda Keyworth, Jennifer Matthew, Joy Neville, Colin Reston, Paula Rollason,
Jenny Salberg, Anne Wicks, Chairman: James Dudley-Smith

1. Opening worship

James opened with prayer and a reading from Numbers chapter 20 which was about the Israelites discontent with Moses due to lack of water and food in the desert and God's miracle that water should come out of the rock. Referring to conversations with 2 applicants for the Youth Ministers job who subsequently sent in very late applications James said that whilst we should not presume that one of them will be the right person our God is a God of miracles and he can provide for us and we must trust him.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Bob Banfield, Rev Ed Bangay, Nick Chatwin, Keith Ovenden, Roy Penny, Keith Stevens, David and Kath Upton, Martin Warr

3. Minutes of Previous meetings

Minutes of the meetings held on 11th March were approved without amendment.

4. Matters Arising

a) Parish Youth Worker

James said that 4 candidates out of 7 applicants had been selected to visit the parish on Friday evening to meet the youth groups and attend interviews on Saturday morning. He hoped that we would be able to make a decision on the Saturday although there was a possibility that no decision would be made. James hoped that the Diocesan Growth fund may reconsider their award of a grant of £5,000 and hopefully increase it.

b) Church History Book

The secretary reported that the person most likely to do the job is currently producing a book on Yeovil that was due to be completed in the autumn. He hoped that he would look at it then.

5. Correspondence

There was no correspondence

6. Review of Sub Committees of the Church Council and PCC

James handed out a list of the various sub committees showing where they fitted into the structure of the parish with the names of current members of each committee. A copy is filed with these minutes. James asked whether there were any other committees and Jenny Salberg mentioned the Social committee. James asked how people get on to the committees in the first place. There was a feeling that those on the committees were all people who had been members of St John's for some years and there were no new people. James said that this particularly applied to the finance committee although the secretary said that certain people namely the treasurer, covenant office and a church warden needed to be on. At this point it was decided to receive the presentation by the church architect John Beauchamp and it was later decided to ask the rector and wardens to consider this matter further.

7. Presentation by the church architect, John Beauchamp, on the state of the church building.

Roger Fox introduced John Beauchamp who proceeded to talk through a PowerPoint presentation showing pictures of the church stonework and particularly the tower. He explained that during the recent work carried out on the building it had been possible to take a closer at the stonework from the scaffolding and as a result certain work which was considered more urgent had been carried out although the total amount spent would be within the budgeted amount. However it was apparent that there were other areas particularly on the tower where there was considerable decay in the stonework and a possibility that large chunks of masonry could fall at any time. Also in previous attempts to repair the stonework the Victorians had inserted iron pegs between joints and some of these had rusted causing further damage. John Beauchamp said that it was his duty to bring this to the attention of the Church Council as there was a possibility that a person standing close to the tower could be seriously injured if a large piece of masonry fell on them. Asked what his recommendation was, he said that we should consider restricting access to the vicinity of the tower by erecting a fence which he suggested should be at least 8 feet away from the tower.

Roger said that he had written to the Town Clerk about the state of the tower and suggesting that the Town Council consider re-routing the pathway away for the tower but he had not received a reply.

John Beauchamp was asked if he could give an estimate of the likely cost of repairing the stonework on the tower. His reply was that this was really the job for a quantity surveyor who would examine the building, estimate what work needed to be done, and based upon his experience give an estimate of the total cost. He also said that the hire of a cherry picker would allow a closer inspection of the stonework which may enable a better estimate to be given. His view was that a quantity surveyor would charge about £300 for preparing an estimate.

It was therefore decided that we should, in consultation with the Town Council, fence off the area around the base of the tower, not necessarily to prevent the public from using that area (which given the nature of activities in the churchyard would be unlikely to work!) but to make it obvious that to step over the fence would put them in danger. Ask the Town Council to consider re-routing the paths in this area to discourage its use and undertake studies to establish the most feasible way of tackling the problem in the long term; to get an estimate of its cost and see what grants might be available towards it.

James thanked John for his presentation.

8. Finance Report

Martin had sent a verbal report that the accounts for the first 3 months were in line with the budget. However he was concerned that not all those who had promised money towards the Youth Worker had started their giving. Roger said that he was in the process of looking into this matter but some people had agreed to start when the person has been appointed and some had dated their standing orders to start at a later date.

9. Fabric

a) External Repairs

Roger said the current work had been completed within the agreed price although there had been some changes to the work carried out as mentioned under item 7 above.

b) Internal Redecoration and Lighting Scheme

Roger said that he was still looking at the lighting as we need to show the DAC that we have sought advice from the proper people but whilst some lighting experts want their scheme to make a statement he was concerned that our new lighting was better than now. He also said that in connection with enhancing the bells it may be necessary to seek advice from a structural engineer.

10. Forthcoming Events

- a) Lunchtime service at 1.15pm on Ascension Day lasting 30 minutes with tea and cake afterwards.
- b) On Pentecost Sunday there will be a 5th Sunday communion service in St John's with the choir, music group and puppets. There may be a service with the YCC and other churches later on the year.
- c) On 2nd July we are hosting an event for the Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship on the environment with a Cambridge Professor Bob White.
- d) Civic service on Sunday 5th July at 6.30pm.
- e) Holiday club at the end of July.
- f) PCC away day is still to be decided upon.

11. Any other business

a) Review of Services

James said that it had been agreed that we would review the Sunday services and he asked how this should be done. Whether it was a PCC matter, Church Council matter or whether we involve the whole congregation or have just a small group. It was agreed to put an article on the magazine, that a small group discuss it and to bring the matter back to the next Church Council meeting.

b) Constitution of the LEP

James handed out a paper on the constitution of the LEP which was being reviewed. The Rev. Ian Green is chairman and felt uneasy that the constitution that we signed up to, although considered appropriate at the time, does not reflect the current mood of the members. The paper shows at the top the aims as they were and at the bottom the aims as it is now felt they should be. James asked us to take the paper away and consider the suggested aims.

c) Archdeacons Visitation

Jennifer Matthew said that at the Archdeacon's visitation they were asked whether we had a 5 year plan. Jennifer asked whether this could be considered at the next PCC away day.

There being no further business James closed the meeting with open prayer at 9.50pm.

Date of Next Meeting – 15th September