

Minutes of a Meeting of the St. John's & St. Andrew's Parochial Church Council held on Tuesday 14th April 2009, in the Schoolrooms

The following were present:

Ed Bangay, Bob Banfield, John Brookes, Ros Bush, Ian Croxford, Roger Fox, Alan Irwin, Phil Juggins, Jennifer Matthew, David Maynard-Griffin, Joy Neville, Colin Reston, Paula Rollason, Anne Wicks, Revd. James Dudley-Smith, Chairman

1. Opening Worship

James opened the meeting with a bible reading from 1 Corinthians Chapter 15 which begins "Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain". This is a chapter about the resurrection but what does it mean to us? What are we going to do about it? Stand firm and always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord. It is an all or nothing thing. Our work in the Lord is not in vain because of the resurrection. James concluded with prayer that we may be Easter people routed in Christ and the resurrection.

2. Apologies

Nick Chatwin, Beth Farrington, Jenny Jones, Ted King, Keith Ovenden, Ruth Preston, Jenny Salberg, Bill Solley, David Upton, Kath Upton.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes for the previous PCC meeting held on 21st October 2008 were accepted and signed.

4. Matters arising

a) Youth worker for the parish

James reported that the advert is out and an application pack has been prepared and 8 packs have been sent out. The closing date for applications is 10th May and interviews will take place on 22nd/23rd May.

b) Communications and Publicity

Jennifer Matthew agreed to put a summary of Church Council business in the magazine for St. John's and David Maynard Griffin agreed to do it for St. Andrew's. Ed said that it would be helpful to put a list of names of PCC members in the magazine. It was also agreed to put agendas on the web site. Roger Fox agreed to put a sign on the external notice board headed "Church of St John the Baptist".

c) Hosting an ordination candidate.

Leslie Macreadie is starting with us on 20th April for 8 weeks and James has arranged for her to meet selected leaders of church groups. Her visit is expected to be fairly low profile but she needs to get a good overall view of church life but will focus on one particular area of her choice.

5. Correspondence

None

6. Review of Easter services and events

The AGM was well attended. It was confirmed that Roger Fox was an elected and not a co-opted member of the PCC. Ed said that we should encourage members to raise matters at the AGM and it was agreed we should allow more time for discussion on the annual report. The issue of numbers on the PCC was raised and the secretary agreed to clarify the position.

The Street Pastors service was very good and encouraging. It was noted that so far

there are only 2 from St. John's parish but that about 10 churches are represented. It was felt that the evening services in Holy week at St. Andrews had not been as well attended as they had not received much publicity. The walk of witness was not as well attended possibly due to the weather but there was a good representation from the churches in the town. The Easter Day services were excellent and well attended. The workshop on Good Friday was very good. The Easter evening service with Bishop Timothy Dudley-Smith in St. John's was very well attended with representatives from many churches and the singing was very good. It was agreed to discuss Christmas services with reference to St. Andrew's at a later meeting.

7. Report on Church Council Meetings

St. Johns

The secretary reported on the St. John's AGM. Ros Bush and Jennifer Matthew were elected as wardens and Alan Irwin and Phil Juggins as deputy wardens. There are 200 on the electoral roll, an increase of 9. There was a deficit of £1,254 on the general operating costs, mainly due to the high cost of light and heat. Over £20k was reclaimed in income tax on gift aided income and we have reserves of over £300k of which nearly £292k is on deposit with the Church Commissioners. £10k was held in the Youth worker investment fund and if everyone honours their pledges there should be an income of £1,100 per month. A question was raised by Roger Fox on the numbers of church members reported to the Diocese for October which he said should be reported at the AGM. The secretary agreed to clarify the position.

St. Andrews

David Maynard-Griffin reported on St. Andrew's and in particular the main items highlighted in quinquennial survey had been dealt with. The play area has been completed. The loop system is still causing problems. All the electrical equipment in the hall has been checked and the cooker replaced.

8. Reports from meetings

a) Deanery Synod

There have been no meetings since the last report.

b) Town Centre Churches (LEP)

Beth and Chris Salberg are our representatives. Anne Wicks said that she had heard negative comments on the Lent groups. A meeting to review the constitution is planned. Ian Croxford has agreed to represent us on the committee set up look at church provision in the new housing developments.

9. Future Events

Diocese 1,100 celebrations.

The Bishop is walking in this area on 18th June. Family event at Glastonbury on 4th July.

Holiday Club

Jennifer confirmed that the leadership is set up for this year but feels that some of those who have been doing it for a long time are looking to step down for next year. James said that it does not always have to be run as in previous years and it may be appropriate to make some changes to the format.

PCC Away Day

It was nearly 2 years since our last away day and James wondered whether we should have another one. He suggested that we may like to go to the parish in Wimborne where he did his curacy. This is quite a large progressive church with large premises and it would be a good opportunity to see what they were doing and how they had made changes. Ed thought that we should look at strategy. It was agreed that James would find out if there was a suitable date to go to Wimborne.

10. Update on Diocesan Finances

James said that he had just become a member of the Diocesan Synod and they had recently discussed the financial position of the Diocese. In 2003 a group had got together and it was noted that we were overspending and the reason was that we had too many paid clergy (the Sheffield formula) compared with other diocese. A strategy was agreed to reduce the number of clergy to 196 by 2013 but it was apparent that we were not going to meet that number and we were continuing to overspend to the tune of £8m by 2013. Various options were put forwards to remedy the position.

- a) Do we continue to reduce clergy at a slow rate meaning that we will not meet the target for some time?
- b) Do we encourage clergy to retire so that we meet the target by 2013?
- c) Do we reduce numbers at a slower rate and extend the deadline to 2016?
- d) Do we seek to cut costs in other ways such as non clergy paid posts?
- e) Do we make a more innovative use of resources?
- f) Do we increase the parish share at a higher rate than RPI.

The synod was asked to vote on the options and the results in order of preference were:

1. Cut costs in other ways.
2. Increase income in other ways.
3. Extend the deadline to 2016.
4. Increase the parish share.
5. Do nothing.

Various views were expressed about how the Diocese should be managed and James suggested that if we have strong views then we should consider standing for the Diocesan Synod.

11. What items would you like to discuss at future Council meetings?

James said that we are the elected people and it was up to us to put matters forward for discussion. It was fairly easy to put forward agendas for Church Council meetings but it is more difficult for PCC meetings. Ed suggested that we have two PCC away days which would give a different feel to the meetings compared with Church Council meetings. Jennifer thought that it was really helpful to be able to discuss wider issue matters of the Church of England. She would like to discuss the structure and membership of the sub committees of our Church Councils and do we need to review the changes that we made last year to the form and content of services. Roger raised the issue of the church architect wanting to talk to the Church Council about the state of the stonework on the tower. Jennifer expressed concern about any personal liability that could attach to an accident arising from falling masonry if we were knowingly aware of dangerous stonework. Anne Wicks raised the issue of the requirements of persons allowed to work with children and Ian Croxford suggested that we discuss the roll of fellowship groups.

James asked us to put forward suggestions.

11. Any Other Business

- a) Ed mentioned that some water authorities were seeking to charge churches for surface water running into public drains.
- b) Bob Banfield raised the issue of youths congregating at the priests' door and resulting damage to stonework and bad language. Roger said that he had suggested to the Town Council that they remove the paving slabs and grass over the area. Roger would ask the builders to remove the engraving on the stonework.
- c) Ian Croxford asked if the Oddments Theatre Company could have a plant sale after the 10.30am service on Sunday 17th May to raise funds. James said that this should be possible but would Ian confirm it to him by e-mail.
- d) Ian asked if we could provide an audience at the Swan Theatre later in the month when the Youth for Christ would be filming of a DVD for the Youth Alpha course.

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

Date of the next meeting: 20th October 2009