

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY

*Minutes of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council
held in the Church Hall on Wednesday 17 March 2010*

Present: Huw Nicholas in the chair, Cathy Rogers, Amanda Ferris, Margaret Bell, Morag Broadbent, Claire Harald, Ian McMullen, Margaret Owen, Claire Pedrick, Dianne Sheppee, Andrew Stoten, Paul Thomson, Roger Thomson, Ray Tye and Judy Watson.

Apologies: Margaret Dack and Gavin Horner.

Ian McMullen opened the meeting by reading a poem "The Difference", followed by verses from Matthew 7 and prayer.

09/71 Approval of minutes of PCC meeting held 20 January 2010

These were approved and signed.

09/72 Matters arising

Huw Nicholas thanked the retiring PCC members Morag Broadbent, Margaret Bell, Dianne Sheppee and Ian McMullen for their contributions over the last 3 years.

09/73 Matters arising from Standing Committee held on 2 March 2010

- a) Chris Cheesman has repaired the steps. Two vertical sections of window frame in the church hall need repair due to corrosion. £200 per section has been quoted. This was approved.
- b) Some of the slabs of the walkway between the church and the hall have subsided. HN will effect a temporary repair and obtain advice and quotes from professionals as to a long-term solution. **ACTION: HN**
- c) Robinsons have estimated about £700 + VAT for moving/raising the radiators in the sanctuary. They have said that it would be expensive to move the thermostat. It was agreed just to attend to the radiators, with the work to be done in the summer.
- d) RBT has placed items in the weekly notices concerning the electoral roll and the PCC vacancies. The PCC approved the appointment of Dianne Sheppee as the new Electoral Roll Officer, replacing Jane Brown. Dianne indicated that she will replace the cumbersome spreadsheet with a more user-friendly system. **ACTION: DS**
- e) Two more sidesmen have volunteered their services. The possibility of using members of iScape for PGT services will be explored.
- f) The Welcome team will be disbanded *pro tem*, due to insufficient volunteers. However, a number of church members will be attending the "Welcome Conference" at St George's on 27 March.
- g) Huw Nicholas has written to 4 architects to enquire whether they would be prepared to carry out our quinquennial inspection, and to include the hall. Replies have been received from three. **ACTION: HN**

h) The model of the Loch Ness Monster in the church will remain there until Tuesday. It was created by the 4th Letchworth Cubs group and won 1st prize in a craft competition.

09/74 Finance

- i) Andrew Stoten distributed copies of the 2009 accounts and of a budget for 2010. These showed a surplus of £7305 in 2009. There are assets of £136,000. The major refurbishments in the church, including the audio system, at a cost of about £23,000, were met from general funds. The missionary committee was able to allocate about £23,000. The vacancy expenses were recorded in a separate account. A balanced budget has been set for 2010 at £148,000. It was agreed that these accounts should be submitted to the APCM.
- ii) Nigel Woodbridge has agreed to be the Independent Examiner of the accounts for 2010.
- iii) We shall need to re-apply to the Diocese for a further grant for Clare Townsend for her youth work.

09/75 Fabric

Huw Nicholas reported that the hall heating has been a problem. Robinsons have inspected the system and have found that 2 fans have failed. The fans are very old and it is not known whether they can be replaced, or at what cost. Robinsons will advise us. In the meantime they have rearranged the working fans, which has improved the heating.

09/76 APCM – 25 April 2010

This will take place at 11.00am in the church hall, after a short 10.00am service. Ray Tye has agreed to stand as a churchwarden. There will therefore be 5 vacancies for the PCC. Madeleine Nicholas will prepare the parish report. Clare Townsend will have charge of the children in the church while the APCM takes place.

09/77 Church heating

See 09/73(c) above.

09/78 Media system laptop

Huw Nicholas outlined the need for a new laptop in church. It was agreed that this should be portable. Andrew Stoten explained that we still have almost £2,000 in the PowerPoint fund. It was agreed that a suitable laptop should be purchased.

ACTION: HN

09/79 Judy Watson report re CCPAS

After Huw Nicholas had thanked Judy for her time spent in dealing with this matter, she explained the new procedures. Her report had been circulated to PCC members before the meeting. From 1 March the diocese has passed responsibility for processing Enhanced Disclosures (EDs) to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS). Judy has registered as our Lead Recruiter and Roger Thomson has agreed to act as a Recruiter as necessary. A direct debit has been set up for making the necessary payments for CRB checks. The PCC agreed to abide by the procedures and policies set out in

Judy's report, and to incorporate Appendices B, C and D into our existing policies. We shall need a separate non-portable lockable cabinet for storage of References and Confidential Declaration Forms. HN will investigate. Vicky Cameron will no longer receive confidential forms: these will all be received by the Lead Recruiter. It was agreed that Judy will update our existing paperwork. It appears we need to put in place a structured recruitment policy. Judy's report sets out the recommended recruitment and appointment procedure. Concern was expressed that this procedure involving a detailed application form, a job description, an interview, 2 references and a written contract will deter people from volunteering. Claire Pedrick suggested that we should differentiate between "newcomer" volunteers and existing church members. As this procedure is regarded as "best practice" and is not a legal requirement, it was agreed to wait for the arrival of our new incumbents before making any changes. Also, Claire Pedrick will make enquiries through her contacts as to the need for adoption of these changes.

9/80 Deanery Synod report

As the January meeting clashed with our PCC meeting, none of our representatives attended the synod, which featured reports from Rev'd Barry Pate and Rev'd John Luscombe on their sabbaticals.

09/81 Vacancy update

It has been agreed that on Sunday 23 May the morning service at St Paul's will start at 9.30 and the service at All Saints will start at 11.30 to enable Simon and Louise to attend both services. A bring-and-share lunch for both congregations will follow at 1.00pm. Bishop Alan will conduct the Licensing service on 19 May. Invitations have been sent out: about half have replied so far, and of these about two-thirds wish to come.

A cleaning party will be present in the vicarage next Tuesday. The windows and carpets will be professionally cleaned and all should be finished before Easter.

09/82 Correspondence

1) Bishop Alan has written to announce a Service of Farewell to Bishop Chris Foster on Sunday 16 May at 4.00pm prior to his move to Portsmouth. The PCC agreed to give a donation of £100 to his farewell gift.

ACTION: AS

2) Ann Owen has drawn attention to a communication from Premier Christian Media inviting people to Promise to Vote in accordance with Christian principles in the forthcoming election. She would be happy to act as the point of contact and to collect names. The PCC was happy to support her in this and Roger Thomson will arrange for an item in the weekly notices.

ACTION: Roger T.

3) Tracey Welbury, a Community Learning Co-ordinator at North Herts College, wishes to link into working with groups in the community. She would like to discuss any needs/projects which would benefit from a joint approach. It was agreed that Roger Thomson would reply, explaining about our vacancy and suggesting that she should contact Simon and Louise after they have become established.

ACTION: Roger T.

- 4) The Diocese of St Albans Europe Group are seeking to publicise Europe Day on Sunday 9 May. A special pack will be included with the Parish Bundle.
- 5) Posters for the Walk of Witness on Good Friday have been received for display.

09/83 Any other business

- 1) Amanda Ferris explained that some young people may wish to be baptised by complete immersion. This would be feasible by borrowing a suitable pool. Simon Moore has indicated that he would be happy with this. It could possibly be part of the PGT service on 2 May.
- 2) Margaret Owen, a CIS Trustee, explained that CIS are holding a quiz night on Saturday 2 October in the church hall to raise funds for their schools worker, Christopher Baker. She asked whether the PCC would reduce the hiring charge. The PCC agreed to waive the hiring charge.
- 3) Claire Pedrick explained that she would like St Paul's to be a Facebook group. There would be no confidentiality issues. It could attract young people who currently do not go to church. Some concerns were expressed about privacy and confidentiality issues. As this would be a new initiative, and as such should not be introduced during a vacancy, it was agreed to defer this matter until after the vacancy, and to include it on the agenda for the PCC meeting after the APCM.
- 4) Ray Tye reported that the barn dance made a profit of £130. He plans to have an Easter egg hunt in the vicarage garden on Easter Sunday. The family day at Kingshott School on 10 July will be from 2pm to 7pm, with the swimming pool being manned and available from 2pm to 5pm.

The meeting closed at 10.05pm. with the Grace.