

Minutes of a Meeting of the St John's & St Andrew's Parochial Church Council held on Tuesday 20th March 2012, in the Schoolrooms

The following were present:

Edward Armitstead, Ed Bangay; Bob Banfield, Eddie Brooks, John Brookes, Ros Bush, Simon Corner, Ian Croxford, Rob Dean, Jenny Jones, Phil Juggins, Tim Lewis, Iain Maitland, David Matthew, David Maynard-Griffin, Joy Neville, Helen Peace, David Preston, Jenny Salberg, Nick Scorer, David Upton, Kath Upton, Robert Warr, Anne Wicks, Revd James Dudley-Smith (Chair)

1. Opening Worship

James opened the meeting with a reading from 1 Peter 2 v11-12 "Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage 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." James said that we live in a world where Christian things are no longer as acceptable as they were as evidenced by recent court cases concerning Christian values and now the redefining of marriage. We are accused of doing wrong but as Peter says we must abstain from sinful desires, guard our own holiness, live good lives and be seen to be doing good deeds and our prayer should be that God may glorify himself through us. James concluded with prayer.

2. Apologies

Roger Fox, Alan Irwin, Ted King, Paula Rollason, Martin Warr

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Parochial Church Council Meeting held on 4th October were approved without amendment and signed by James

4. Correspondence

A letter had been received from the Feofees of Yeovil Church Lands informing the PCC that John Ridgers had resigned as a trustee and had been replaced by Keith Ovenden and David Upton.

5. Report on Church Council Meetings St John's

The accounts for 2011 showed a surplus of £14,298 which included the results of the gift day amounting to £12,596. The budget for 2012 shows a deficit of £1,202.

The quinquennial survey is due to take place on Friday and the results will be used to apply for a grant from English Heritage towards the restoration of the tower. We should hear by Christmas whether we will get a grant and we will then start fundraising and hope to start work in 2014. The font cover has been removed and is now being stored in the Holy Cross Chapel. Two new lights have been installed at the chancel crossing. The amplification system is now fully working and a number of operatives are being trained. The two downstairs rooms in the schoolrooms had been redecorated and the floor coverings will be replaced shortly.

Church attendance as measured in October was up by 18% and congregations over Christmas were significantly higher. The Sunday evening service is going very well with average attendances of between 80 and 100.

St Andrew's

David Maynard-Griffin reported that the accounts for 2012 were in the black. The church attendance in October was lower due to a number of people who have moved into retirement homes and others unable to come due to age or illness. On 19th November they held an open meeting to discuss the way forward. This was a very positive meeting when they discussed their strengths and weakness, threats and opportunities. There is a plan to use one of Ted's Friday evening services each month for the Church Council to reflect and pray. Attendance at the first Sunday communion services has not dropped or the fourth Sunday evening prayer but the congregations on the second and third Sunday which are non-communion services are down. The quinquennial survey is due next year and they are looking for a new architect at a reasonable cost. The push exit bar to the hall door has been repaired.

6 Reports from Meetings

a) Deanery Synod

Rob Dean said that there had been one meeting when Ian Croxford gave a presentation on CAP and particularly the evangelical aspects. He encouraged other parishes to get involved. David Keen spoke on the missionary work in the Deanery and the More than Gold Olympic Games initiative. A presentation was made to Ed Bangay in recognition of his service as secretary. There will be a book from the Deanery to be signed celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee which will be sent to the Queen. The number of Street Pastors is increasing. A letter has been received from the Diocese about the parish share and out of 495 parishes only three are in category A. The budget for 2012 is, in total, the same as the previous year. 40% of clergy are due to retire in the next 10 years. Edward Armitstead gave a presentation on the General Synod. There were three main items, new parochial fees to be approved in the Archbishops Council, a talk on the plight of Christians in Nigeria and the new code of practice covering women bishops' exercising their powers. The Deanery prayer cycle is being reintroduced and prayers for the St. John's parish will be on 23rd of April. James volunteered to send a list of prayer requests to the other churches. A discussion followed on which category we should be in for the parish share purposes. Phil said that St. John's was categorized by an outside agency as an E but it was thought that we are probably a C. St Andrew's are probably an E. Our banding is supposed to be discussed and agreed by the PCC.

b) Local Ecumenical Partnership – LEP

There had only been one meeting since the last meeting and they are now being held in Pat Russell's house. It has been decided to discontinue the fifth Sunday evening united services due to poor attendances. In future there will only be two committee meetings a year. Ian spoke to them about CAP. They met the new minister of the URC, Stella Hayton, and the Methodists are appointing a paid Deacon to work on the new estates.

c) Beyond Yeovil Group

The BYG evening event was very good evening although the attendance was a bit disappointing. It was very good to be able to see and talk to and pray with Ruth Hulser. Phil said that he had received an e-mail from her afterwards saying

that the baby that they prayed about was improving and ready to leave hospital.

d) Christians Against Poverty

Ian said that the main report is in the AGM report. The CAP centre has now been running for a year and clients are turning up in church. There are about four new clients a month and the work is very demanding and quite draining but very worthwhile. Although there is not an immediate need for additional money there will be in the longer term when we may have to raise money to be able to employ additional help. The money promised by the Diocese is still awaited.

e) 18 to 30's Group

Tim said that it is encouraging and last week 15 attended. They are now meeting fortnightly to allow people to get involved with other things. Several are attending the Sunday evening services. Tim asked us to pray they do not lose momentum as they no longer meet weekly.

7. Proposal for a new parish web site

With the aid of a projector David Matthew showed us how his new web site would look. He said that the old web site which had been designed by Ian Croxford about 15 years ago had served us well but although updated regularly had not been changed. The main advantage of his site which uses software called Word Press is that it is very easy to update and a number of authorized people could add content although David would have overall control. The current site is hosted on a server owned by James Ovenden which is not entirely satisfactory as they are not set up to offer us support. The new site is hosted by an independent company at a cost of about £30 a year for up to 5 sites. It would primarily be a St. John's site but St Andrew's could have their own site with a link between the two. The new web site was received favorably but Ian Croxford said that it was important that we set a date for the changeover and keep to it even if the new site is not 100% ready.

8. Proposal for a letter from the PCC to our MP regarding marriage

James said that this had been discussed by churchwardens and the thought was that we should write a letter to David Laws. Discussion followed on what sort of letter to write and whether it should be signed by all the PCC. It was evident that whilst the majority were against the proposal to redefine marriage there were some who were not against it. Helen suggested that we write individual letters and she agreed to produce some ideas of what to say for those who may find it difficult. Joy thought that we should send both a corporate letter and personal letters. It was agreed that it was important to let David Laws know our views otherwise he might assume that we accepted the proposal. Phil said we need to be positive in our letter and not unloving. It was agreed that James would draft a letter to be signed by himself and the secretary which he would circulate to the PCC and subject to a majority view would send it to David Laws.

9 Proposal for a letter from the PCC regarding car park charges on Sundays and evenings

James read a letter which he had drafted to send to the South Somerset District Council opposing the introduction of charging. This was warmly supported by the PCC and the letter was passed around the PCC for their signature.

10. Report on the Patronage of the Parish

James said that the patronage of the parish is in the hands of the Diocesan Board of Patronage which is a body of about 12 elected members who have the patronage of about 24 parishes in the diocese. They take a keen interest in the parishes that they are responsible for and the chairman and one other member visited the parish and took James and Tim out to lunch. The purpose of the visit was to update themselves on how the parish is doing and how church life is developing so that when the next vacancy arises they know something about the parish.

11. Future events:

a) Holiday Club

Simon said that a committee has been formed and letters have gone out asking for specific jobs to be done and also a letter to volunteers. The theme will be the Olympics. The next meeting is on 2nd April.

b) Parish Weekend Away

Helen and Tim have visited Heatree and it looks really good with lots of meeting rooms and facilities. Most rooms are en-suite and we will be catered for although we will have to clear up afterwards. There are about 80 adults and 28 children going.

c) Easter Services

These are as in previous years with the addition of an all-age family service at 10am on Good Friday. This will finish in time for the walk of witness at 11am.

d) Bishops' visit to the Yeovil Deanery

The two bishops are visiting the Deanery on 18th and 19th April. They are having lunch at the Gateway on the 18th to learn about CAP and the Lord's Larder. We are all invited to a question time at 7.30pm on the 18th at Marston Magna village hall and questions can be submitted beforehand.

e) Tim's ordination, 30th June

Tim's ordination will be on Saturday 30th June at 4.30pm in Wells Cathedral. All are invited.

12. Any Other Business

Olympic Torch

This passes through Yeovil, along Princess Street and down Silver Street on 22nd May at 7.30am. Roger Fox and his team are ringing the bells and David Keen has suggested that we serve coffee and bacon butties in the churchyard.

Childrens' Society

Jenny Jones said that she will be putting some collecting envelopes at the back of St. John's on 15th April if anyone would like to contribute.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee Social Event

Jenny Salberg asked whether we were going to have a social event. Tim suggested having a tea in the churchyard on the Sunday afternoon and an invitation service in the evening.

Sharing the Peace

Jenny Salberg asked why we no longer share the peace in St. John's. James said that they do at the 8am service but he would talk about it at another meeting.

Responsibility for seeing that hirers of the Schoolrooms and St. Andrew's hall are CRB checked

Kath raised this issue. Simon said that he had spoken to Nigel Liddiard at the Diocesan St John's and St. Andrew's PCC

office who said that we still have a responsibility to see that hirers are CRB checked. We also need to make sure that they have insurance and that our insurers cover us. Simon agreed to find out more about exactly what we need to do.

Cards for Good Causes

Kath said that Cards for Good Causes have asked if they can use the church from 15th October to 8th December. This was agreed but it was pointed out that they must remove their rubbish and must not store things in the Schoolrooms or church afterwards.

13. St John's Business

a) Approval of the 2011 Accounts and Annual Report

The annual report which had been circulated to members of the church council was approved.

14. Date of the next meeting

PCC 2nd October

There being no further business the meeting finished with prayer at 9.45pm