

Minutes of a Meeting of the St John's Church Council held on Tuesday 18th September 2012, in the Schoolrooms

The following council members were present:

Edward Armitstead, Eddie Brooks, John Brookes, Ros Bush, Simon Corner, Rob Dean, Roger Fox, Phil Juggins, Tim Lewis, Iain Maitland, David Matthew, Joy Neville, Helen Peace, David Preston, Jenny Salberg, Nick Scorer, David Upton, Kath Upton, Anne Wicks

Chairman: James Dudley-Smith

1. Opening worship

James opened with a reading from 1 Corinthians 3 v10. Paul was not very pleased with the church in Corinth where they were divided and have got their theology wrong in all sorts of ways. Paul had laid the foundation to the church as an expert builder based on Jesus Christ but others had built upon it. Paul is warning the church how they build upon that foundation with gold, silver, costly stones or wood, hay or straw and their work will be shown for what it is. This highlights the extreme significance of a local church which should be God's sacred temple. How do we view our relationship with our church? It should be sacred because we are that local church, building a ministry on a foundation built by others, and our work will be tested and shown for what it is.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Ed Bangay, Gordon Crawford, Ian Croxford, Keith Stevens, Paula Rollason, Martin Warr, Robert Warr, and Mike Streatfeild,

3 Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the meetings held on 1st May were approved without amendment.

4. Matters Arising

Relaying services to the Schoolrooms

David Matthew said that he had not done any more on this but that it should be possible but not as straightforward as relaying it to another room. It would probably require a wireless link between the two buildings but he would see if it was possible.

Group for Mothers with young babies

Joy Neville said that she hoped to start this after Christmas.

Apprentices

David Preston raised this. It was likely that an apprentice would be a school or university leaver who would work in a parish for one or two years helping within various areas of local ministry. We would need to provide accommodation and an allowance but they would probably also raise sponsorship themselves. Jenny said that the Pastoral committee have a definite need for a worker. It was agreed to take the matter forward with a view to having someone for possibly the next academic year.

5. Finance Report

In the absence of Martin John gave a report on the last meeting held on 4th September. A letter from the local Crime Reduction Officer recommending steps that we can take to improve the church security was discussed and Phil has a list of actions to implement. The use of lighting in the church was discussed and if we are on duty we are asked to take account of the colour coded light switches in the verger's office to make sure that we are not wasting electricity, particularly the use of the up lights after services.

The latest accounts up to the end of July showed a surplus of £5,939 which was better

than budget by £5,410. The main reason being increased pledged giving and donations. This was a very encouraging result. We have paid out our total giving to missions and charities for the year of £13,250. Joy said how grateful she was that we have been faithful in our giving and God has been faithful to us and we must praise him. The purchase of equipment was discussed as two items had been purchased that had not been properly authorised. In future all requests for the purchase of equipment should be given to Martin and if there is a budget available will need to be agreed by the church officers before expenditure is committed. If equipment is being purchased and donated to the church then it is possible to make use of gift aid and Martin or Roger will advise on the best way to do it.

6. Fabric Reports

Quinquennial Survey

Rob Dean said he had received the report. It is a very good report and it lists the items that need to be attended to over the next 5 years with an estimate of the cost. The items that need to be done within the next 12 months are estimated to cost about £3,000. Phil said that he had a plan to deal with these items with the help of a small fabric group.

Tower

Rob said that our application to English Heritage went in on time but we have been told that we will not be awarded a grant. The reason given is that there is no financial need within St. John's for a grant of £200k. Rob said that we need to decide what to do which could be nothing or to launch an appeal over say the next 5 years which could also include £300k for the organ. There is a possibility that we could apply to the National Lottery Fund in February as they are taking over from English Heritage. It was agreed that we need to discuss the matter with other members of the congregation and pray about it, and that a small fabric committee discuss it and come back with a recommendation at the next church council meeting.

Bells

Roger referred to his article in the magazine about his proposal to enhance the bells which would cost in the order of £200k. The matter was being discussed by the DAC meeting tomorrow and if they approved Roger hoped to take it forward but it would require the support of the Church Council and a faculty. The cost would be met from £70k in the Tom Setter Belfry fund and other money that had been pledged. However Roger would like to ask other members of the congregation if they wanted to contribute towards the cost as they may wish a bell to be dedicated or engraved in memory of a loved one. Rob was concerned that we have three people all talking to the DAC about different projects and perhaps we should have a united approach. James thought that we should get the view of the congregation about what they think ought to be our priorities in time for the next church council meeting.

Schoolrooms

Helen said that she and Gil were going to paint the downstairs cupboards white and then the floor coverings would be renewed.

7. Parish Youth Work

Simon said that since the weekend away they had only had one meeting on a Friday, Pathfinders were very short of leaders. CYFA meetings have been moved to Friday evenings due to the difficulty of also attending Sunday evening services. There will be a tea before the Sunday evening service once a month. Simon would like to set up meetings for CYPHA with members of the congregation either one to one or in small groups. There had been a Unite service last Saturday at the Elim church which was very successful. Schools work at Westfield and The Park School is starting and Simon

has been asked to take assemblies at the Gryphon school and is making contact with the new head at Milford school.

8. Other Church Activities

CAP Report

David Upton had just returned from an interview to become the third debt councillor. It was planned that Ian would stand down until Christmas to concentrate on fund raising and contacting other organisations and David will take his place. David thought that he ought to step down as chairman and there is a need for a new chairperson as well as additional committee members. A CAP money course is starting on 5th November in the schoolrooms.

18 to 30 Group

Tim reported that they had started for the autumn and split into two small groups with him and Beth leading a Christianity Explored course and James and Doreen Maitland leading the other group. Average attendance on a Monday evening is from 8 to 18.

Kids & Co.

There is a need for more helpers preferably without small children. Also for two adults to tell Bible stories.

Fellowship Groups

James reported that the groups had started back for the Autumn and there had been some moving around between groups. Mary Irwin has given up leading a group and it is now being hosted by Chris and Jenny Salberg. The Adams group were dispersing to other groups and Rob Dean is leading a new group.

9. Mission

This will be led by Roger Carswell from 10th to 16th November 2014.

10. Weekend Away

Thanks were expressed to Helen for organising it. She said that she had booked the centre again from 5th to 7th September 2014. Views expressed were that it was an excellent weekend and a good spiritual centre and James said he was thrilled with it. Some said that it felt fairly crowded at times and questioned whether it could cater for a greater number.

11. Forthcoming Events

Back to Church Sunday on 7th October

Both services on the Sunday would be geared towards welcoming new people. Edward Armitstead said that a guest service might be a better title as Back to Church may put some people off. He also felt that we could have guest services on a more regular basis.

Harvest on 14th October

This would not be an AllAge service and there would be children's groups as normal. There would be a choir and music group. There would also be a conventional harvest supper in the schoolrooms on the following Saturday.

Remembrance Sunday

James said that there would be an All Age service in the schoolrooms at 10am which is earlier than previously and would finish in time to allow anyone who wished to go to the Cenotaph at 11am. However the lack of chairs for both the church and schoolrooms was raised as an issue which needs to be considered.

Christmas Services.

As the 23rd December is on a Sunday there would be services on three days in a row.

Sunday services would be as normal with Sunday school in the morning but with the carol service at 6.30pm and it was hoped that no small children would attend. The YCC would be welcome to join us on Christmas day.

Christmas Lunch

Ian and Francis Croxford were organising this and inviting CAP clients. There was a need for more help to prepare and serve lunch.

12. Any Other Business

Book Stall

David Preston raised this as he thought that we should have a bookstall. We used to have a bookstall which was stocked by Keith Jones bookshop and we still have the wooden cabinet. There would be a need for someone to run it. Also we need to consider Keith Jones bookshop, who need all the business that they can get.

All Age Worship

David Preston had concerns about the All Age worship service as some people avoid it and he asked three questions. Is it a suitable main service for a Sunday and what is its intended purpose and is it meeting its intended purpose. James said that it was the hardest service to lead and do well. Many thought that it was invaluable to have a service where all the family are together. David still thought of it as a children's service but Joy disagreed and said that as a parent of young children it was not a children's service. She said that it was crucial that all the family are together once a month as there is an inherent value in being together and she would hesitate in joining a church that did not have an All Age service. Helen thought that sometimes it was geared too much towards adults. James said that we only have one children's service a year on Christmas Eve. David thought that it was not meeting the needs of all ages and cited the example of one person walking out. James said that when he came to the parish he was concerned about having many different congregations which is not right. However whatever service we have there will be those who walk out. Tim asked, do we need to be doing it better and perhaps all leaders need to get together to evaluate the service.

Keith Stevens's Readers License

James asked if we agreed that Keith's readers license be renewed and all were in favour.

13. Dates of future meetings

PCC on Tuesday 2nd October

CC meeting on 20th November to be changed to a new date to be advised

The meeting finished with prayer at 9.45pm