

Minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2021 via Zoom

Present:

Revd Tony Rindl – Chair (TR)
Revd Joshua Brocklesbury (JB)
Roger Courtney (RC)
Peter Dean (PD)
Tilly Elliott (TE)
Cathy Honeyman (CH)
Annafrida Kadzura (AK)
Alison Saunders (AS)
David Scourfield (DS)
Margaret Greenstreet (MG)

Minutes taken by MG. All agreed that the meeting could be recorded to assist preparation of the minutes.

- 1. Opening Prayer:** RC read from Luke 10 where Jesus sent out the seventy-two. He said that this is an illustration of taking the gospel to where the people are. In those days this was by sending people. The pandemic has introduced us to other ways of doing this and the last fifteen months has been the largest mission outreach programme which the Church has ever engaged in, as significant numbers of people have viewed Church events and services online. Therefore, we should make the most of this and use our technology to continue reaching out in this way. He had seen a video which suggested that whatever we do in Church we should have the equivalent to reach the people who cannot come to Church. This is quite a challenge to us. ‘When you enter a house, say “Peace to this house”.’ When people come to Church they are our guests in our house, but when they view us online we are guests in their house and we should remember this.

TR thanked RC. He told the Council that the aim in recent months has been to discuss items for the PCC agenda at their Monday morning staff meeting two weeks before the meeting, so that the agenda and minutes can be sent out to members a week before the meeting. He asked that reports to be discussed at the PCC meeting should also be provided a week ahead of the meeting.

- 2. Apologies for absence:** Jane Carter (JCa), Joanna Cooper (JCo), Clinton Dan-Jumbo (CDJ), Abie Idris (AI)
- 3. Conflict of Interest:** TR reminded everyone of their responsibility to declare any conflict of interest. He declared his own conflict of interest during any discussion relating to the Children and Families Worker. DS has a conflict of interest in any discussion relating to the Town Centre Chaplaincy and it should be remembered that TR is the Chair of Trustees of the Town Centre Chaplaincy.

4. **Approval of Minutes 21st June 2021:** RC proposed that we accept the minutes as a correct record, seconded by CH and agreed by all present.

5. **Matters Arising:**

- The Independent Examiner's Report required that a register of interested parties/possible conflict of interests, including family interests be produced. This has not yet been done.
ACTION: PD to organise, plus forms for new members for the charities commission
- **ACTION: Jacky Faria to organise DBS check for AK and TE**
- The Trustees booklet has been circulated to all members
- **Safeguarding:** There had been a safeguarding concern reported and TR reminded the Council of the responsibility to make a written report of any incident or concern as soon as possible, if not immediately after the event.
- TR thanked PD for organising the speaker at the front of Church and asked about the monitor. PD reported that the monitor is not working.
ACTION: PD to arrange for the AV contractors to look at this next time they are in doing more work
- Jenny Whittick had previously been asked about taking the minutes
ACTION: AS to ask her again for September

6. **Correspondence:** None has been received

7. **Committee Reports:**

Finance: PD had circulated a report in advance. At the end of June, the half year point, overall income was ahead of forecast at 54% and overall spending is below forecast at 44%. At the half year point there was a surplus of £5,688 in comparison with a full year forecast deficit of £38,179. As last year, the overall effect of COVID is more in reduction of expenditure than income. Pre-School income is well ahead of forecast due to the grant received and is likely to result in a surplus at the end the year rather than just breaking even.

The recent appeal had resulted in 15 people responding by increasing or starting regular giving, leading to approximately £500 extra per month, but there have also been some one-off donations totalling approximately £5,000. With several regular givers moving away from Watford either imminently or in recent months it is likely that regular donations could soon be reduced by £750 per month.

AS reminded PD of the preference of the Pre-School to show the pre-school money more clearly in the PCC accounts. PD said that a restricted account could not be used but it would be possible to show it as a designated fund instead.

RC commented that there has been some fairly substantial expenditure since the end of June, in particular £4,000 spent on the Church Centre flat. He also expressed disappointment about the response to the appeal. TR suggested that we should follow up the appeal by thanking those who have donated and reminding the congregation that the need is still there. PD said that our congregation seem happier to make one-off donations rather than commit to regular giving and our forecasts have ended up being inaccurate because we cannot forecast for one-off donations. RC asked if it would be possible to work out an end of year projection.

RC commented that money had been spent on the Church Centre over and above the money raised for the Church Centre. This had not been reflected in the general fund because the money was taken from the Development Fund. The surplus expenditure is approximately £7,000. There was some uncertainty about whether this money needed to be refunded to the Development Fund or not and the PCC would need to discuss this at a later date.

ACTION: Finance Committee to work out an end of year projection for the September meeting

TR to include an update on the appeal and the Church Centre improvements in the Mail Chimp newsletter in the next couple of weeks. PD and RC to provide information to support this.

Buildings: RC had circulated a report prior to the meeting and updated the following points:

- **Brightwell Road:** Nothing to report as the agents had not pressed for a quotation while covid-related restrictions were in place.
- **Floodlights:** An estimate has been received for £7,000 for replacing the faulty floodlights. It is not intended that this work should be undertaken imminently, due to the cost but there was a recurrent problem with the seals. PD asked if it would be possible to separate the lighting of the cross from the up-lighting on the North Side, so that the cross could be illuminated whilst different options are considered for the up-lighters.

ACTION: RC to investigate this possibility.

- AS thanked RC for responding to the request to look at the toilets for the Pre-School so quickly.
- A faulty socket in the nave has been replaced.
- Follow up work in the kitchen is yet to be completed. There is a gap behind the cooker, because of the pipes and a solution to this is being investigated.

Staffing Committee:

DS left the meeting whilst his contract was discussed.

DS's contract is purely with the Watford Town Centre Chaplaincy (WTCC) although St Mary's pays 25% of his salary, but St Mary's provides the payroll for them, as is the case for Pam Rastall. Richard Watson (RW) runs the payroll for St Mary's but his software only allows him to provide the payroll for one company. RW is unhappy having someone on the payroll who does not have a contract with St Mary's. TR said that this was not a new situation as previous chaplains had also been paid through the St Mary's payroll whilst being employed by the WTCC and St Mary's. He referred to the Memorandum of Understanding between St Mary's and the WTCC and stated that the same arrangement had been in place for Frances Novello (FN). PD reported that when FN was employed she initially had two contracts, following advice Marcus Jones had received from ACAS. However, at some point this was simplified and reduced to one contract to make it clearer. It is the lack of a contract with St Mary's which concerns RW because as far as HMRC are concerned DS and PR are employed by St Mary's because we are running the payroll.

RC felt that it would be best to have one contract as it would make the expectations of their roles clearer but perhaps the Memorandum of Understanding should be more specific about what the responsibilities and expectations of each party are to make it clearer.

RC suggested that we should also have a proper leasing agreement for the use of the space because of issues like Health and Safety and the WTCC's insurance.

ACTION: Staffing Committee should meet to discuss both this and the CFW's contract in early September

Pre-School Committee: The committee will be meeting again on 14th September and will discuss the future aspirations of the Pre-school to be added to the business plan. TR requested that a brief report be provided as soon as possible after this date

Missions: AS reported that an email was received from the CMS Church Relations Adviser, John Orchard, about Andrew and Maria Leake. Andrew had been working jointly for CMS and Compassion International, but he has left CMS and will now be working entirely with Compassion International. The CMS Church Relations Adviser had got in touch to find out if we would like to support another missions partner instead. TR felt that the missionaries that we support should be spread around the world, both local and international, and that South America is currently well represented with Andrew Leake, Meninadanca and the Paraguay link, although this is coming to a natural end. AS felt that it was better to support someone that we have a personal interest in rather than someone that we have no history with.

ACTION: Missions Committee to meet in September and decide who should be supported.

Deanery: PD reported that Sam Frampton is now the new vicar at St Matthews.

8. Mission Action Plan (MAP)

Parish, Profile and Partnership. England playing in the Euro Semi-final prevented the MAP being discussed in the July Connect Together meeting and so this will take place in the autumn instead. Bishop Michael will meet the PCC to discuss Asset Based Church Development (ABCD) on 25th September (Saturday morning).

9. Policies: TR shared a list of policies to be reviewed and asked that we develop a rota of policies to be reviewed, starting with the Safeguarding policy in September.

ACTION: JB to research the Race and Equalities

ACTION: PCC members to read the Bullying and Conflict of Interest policies in preparation for the next meeting

ACTION: TR to propose a timescale for future reviewing of policies in September

PD reported that Accounting Policies were reviewed in April as part of the Annual Report and changes are made following advice from the Independent Adviser.

ACTION: PD to check that PR has updated the Accounting Policies

10. Autumn Programme

TR stated that the plan for the Autumn is to have only one evening service a month. The new routine would be:

1st Sunday: 9.00 am Short Said Communion

10.30am Worship for All

5.30pm Evening Service

2nd Sunday: 10.30am Communion

3rd Sunday: 9.00 am Short Said Communion

10.30am Baptisms

4th Sunday: 10.30am Communion

TR expressed his thanks to the choir for stepping up and singing every week in recent months.

JC shared a presentation looking at lessons learnt during the pandemic, and how we can now move forward. He said that we have learnt to worship in different ways, appreciate the sustaining nature of our faith and see the great need in our town.

What this means for us:

- Our 10.30am service plays a key role in enabling us all to meet together again as a whole family
- We have learnt that there are more ways to worship and encounter God
- We need better communication of ways we can volunteer and help in our church and our town
- To want to continue focusing on reaching new people so that our congregation better represents our Parish demographic

He proposed centring things around Encounter, Questions and Change.

Encounter: with God, as Family, Community

- New Evening Service ~ An Evening Encounter
- A monthly connect group exploring new ways to pray
- Encounter as a family: Coffee after Church
- A yearly calendar of social events
- One-off events focused around Christmas and Easter to engage with the Community
- Develop more links with local schools

The new Evening Service:

- Should not be instead of the morning service but in addition
- Won't feel like traditional Church, but be a place for experienced Christians, non-Christians and faith explorers to meet with Jesus and grow
- The initial focus will be different gospel accounts of encounters with Jesus
- It will be once a month so that it can be very creative and well prepared
- It will be different every month
- 5.30pm start with the Church open with coffee from 5pm, to cater for those leaving the shops
- Meet at the Moon would take place afterwards

Questions:

- Monthly after the 10.30 service, ask the Vicar style questions event during coffee time
- Monthly Connect Groups resourced with different questions topics
- Yearly programme of Bible Studies, these will be offered through Zoom and in person
- Questions events outside of the Church, e.g. hosted in Coffee Shops or pubs, which could run in conjunction with the Young Adults Group
- The Current Affairs Connect group is already a questions group and this could be rebranded - Questions for Today
- Alpha

Change: for ourselves, our town, the world

- New groups set up to look at taking action in our community ~ Racial Justice Connect Group, Social Justice Connect Group

- Regularly updated volunteering section on the website and on the Mail Chimp offering opportunities to volunteer in Church and with our partner charities
- A monthly slot in the Sunday morning service for one or more of our partners in mission
- St Mary's to become an Eco-Church and make steps to achieving the Gold Award

All this is only possible with more congregational input.

The discussion that followed emphasised the need for sensitivity in addressing these changes with the rest of the congregation and those who currently lead groups. JB expected the evening service to begin with just current Church members and to grow in numbers as people invite others along. TR encouraged all members of the PCC to make every effort to attend the evening services so that it is easier for visitors to attend.

11. Vicar's Report

- TR reported on the ordinations of Ash David and Phil Macaulay
- TR and DS led prayers for a small service for the NHS outside the Town Hall
- CdC and TR hosted a school visit from a school that has not visited before and he hoped that this area would develop with other schools visiting
- St Mary's will be used as a walk-in vaccination clinic on 27th July in the evenings to reach out to people who have found it difficult because they are working during the day
- TR took part in a Zoom AGM for the Sea Cadets

RC asked if there had been any updated guidance from the diocese regarding changes to services now that restrictions have been lifted. AS reported that the Church of England had said that it is up to individual Churches to do what they feel most comfortable with now that the restrictions have been lifted.

RC felt that it was important for the Church to be seen to be open now that the legal situation has changed. However, it will be difficult to open the church more frequently at the current time. Therefore, it was agreed that 1st September would be the best day to aim for, when more staff will be available but that the notice on the outside of the Church should be changed to inform visitors that this is the case.

ACTION: TR to liaise with appropriate office staff about updating the notice on the outside of the Church

12. Health and Safety Issues/ Safeguarding: Nothing new to report

13. AOB

- **Curtains:** TE reported that many places she has contacted are reluctant to provide samples, but she has now found somewhere in Finchley that is and she hoped to have some samples for the Council to view at the September meeting.
- **PCC Documents:** JB has produced a password protected area of the website for PCC members to access all the documents that they need for meetings.
ACTION: JB to inform members of the password
- AK has met with Helen Baldwin to begin looking at the accounts with a view to taking over as Treasurer.

14. Closing Prayer: The meeting closed at 10.20pm by saying the Living God's Love prayer together