

## Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 via Zoom

### Present:

Revd Tony Rindl – Chair (TR)

Revd Joshua Brocklesby (JB)

Roger Courtney (RC)

Peter Dean (PD)

Abie Idris (AI)

Victor Kitange (VK)

Alison Saunders (AS)

Ivor Jones (IJ)

David Scourfield (DS)

Clinton Dan-Jumbo (CDJ)

Margaret Greenstreet (MG)

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

### 1. Opening prayers

AI began by talking about a recent shopping trip in which her impatience to return her trolley and retrieve her coin had ended up taking longer than it should have done. She then read from Isaiah chapter 40 v 31 “*But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.*”

She reflected on the many paradoxes in the Bible; words which on the surface seem to be contradictory and not make sense, for example, if you want to be first you must be last. She felt that Isaiah’s words were another example. Whilst we often feel irritated when we have to be patient and wait, here we are told that those who wait in the Lord, will have their strength renewed.

We must wait on the Lord's plan for our Church and hold on to his promise. She concluded with prayer, asking for patience and for us to put our trust in God.

2. **Apologies for Absence** were received from Jane Carter, Joanna Cooper, Helen Baldwin, Pat Moore, Tilly Elliott and Cathy Honeyman
3. **Conflict of Interest:** None declared
4. **Approval of Minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021:** The PCC were asked to note the amendments raised by RC. They were proposed by RC and seconded by DS. All who had been present agreed that they were a correct record. TR commented that post meeting notes should be saved for matters arising in the following meeting. He also confirmed that the preferred procedure is for the person writing the minutes to send them to the Church Wardens and himself for checking before sending them out to the rest of the PCC for comment. Accuracy is more important than phraseology.
5. **Matters Arising:** None were raised.
6. **Correspondence:** None received
7. **Committee Reports:**
  - a. **Finance:** PD had circulated a report to the PCC and HB had circulated the December and January accounts prior to the meeting. The 2020 accounts are almost finalised and ready to pass over to the Independent Examiner. The amount of tithe from the lettings income is 10% of gross income from Brightwell Road, the Church Centre flat, Cloisters rent from New Hope and Centre lettings. Income from the Chaplaincy and Watford and Three Rivers Refugee Partnership is not included as we refund part of this already. There were no questions raised.

**Budget/Financial Forecast 2021:** DS had circulated a report outlining the work done by a small group of PCC members over the last month. The most accurate prediction based on current information is that a deficit of £38,679 is forecast. The recommendation is that we accept this forecast but take action to increase the expected income. We do have enough in our reserves to meet this sort of deficit, should it be required, but we cannot afford to continue having a deficit of this size year after year. Therefore, it is essential that we take action to reduce the deficit both this year and in future years.

CDJ felt that a distinctly Anglican pre-school would be highly sought after and should be well advertised as places would soon fill up if people were aware of it. AS responded with the Pre-School report (see below).

TR responded to questions saying that as much as possible had been done to reduce expenditure and therefore the emphasis this year must be on increasing income and not to rely too heavily on God's generosity.

IJ highlighted that staffing is not just the responsibility of the Leadership Team and Staffing Committee (as stated in the report) but the whole PCC. TR agreed but

emphasised that the Leadership Team are in the best position to recognise the work done by different members of staff and see clearly what needs doing.

Following some discussion about how best to act on the recommendations it was agreed that:

- The working group led by DS should meet again before the next PCC. Other members of the PCC were encouraged to join the group. They would work on developing a strategy for communicating to the wider church congregation and enhancing income. TR commended PM's skills in presenting the information in a way that is clear to the congregation and hoped that she would be involved in this group.
- The Pre-School committee will work on improving publicity to increase the numbers of children attending and therefore increase income
- A different group of people should look at the development of the MAP which would be a longer term project, with a timetable being put to the PCC in the next couple of months.
- The finance committee will establish regular monthly meetings and work on the setting of and reporting on the budget

DS proposed that the PCC receive this report and agrees to work on the recommendations. RC seconded the proposal and all agreed.

**Brightwell Road:** PD reported that there are indications that the tenant will come forward with the name of a contractor that they are happy with to do the work required, as requested, but this has not yet been provided. Electrical reports are needed on rented properties by April (and then every 5 years) so this will need to be addressed soon. Gas checks need to be done annually.

- b. **Buildings:** RC had circulated a report to the PCC prior to the meeting.

**Bell Tower**

The DAC have since responded to the proposal for a platform over the bell frame to provide a secure base for access to the clock gearboxes, to say that they do not believe the use of plywood and the proposed sound test will work. RC has discussed this with the architect again and they now suggest a temporary platform created from wood could be put up when needed (once every year or two) and taken down when not in use. This proposal will be put to the DAC soon. A formal health and safety risk assessment will need to be carried out soon.

**Church Centre refurbishment**

The ceilings and lighting have been done in the Church Centre.

The fire alarm has been enhanced but the control panel has been reported as being obsolete. An estimate of the cost has been requested.

The main works are all done and the decorating should be done in the next month or so.

The design on the sliding door should be fitted this week.

No questions were raised.

- c. **Staffing Committee:** The committee has not met.

- d. **Pre-School** – AS reported that the AGM and a committee meeting were held on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The staff are particularly grateful for the new flooring. The budget had been revised and presented. The constitution was discussed briefly but it was decided that more time was needed to produce both this and the business plan. The committee will be meeting again next week with a view to producing a document in time for the March PCC meeting. The committee will also be considering ways in which to develop a distinctively Christian ethos in the school. Publicity was discussed, especially the use of banners, posters and the website.

DS offered to discuss the use of banners to publicise the Pre-School with AS in relation to planning regulations.

- e. **Missions Committee:** This has not met. TR questioned where the tithe money should go. PD and AS responded that there is a resolution still valid on this i.e. that the money is split evenly between charities already identified.

#### 8. **Budget 2021: See Finance Committee report (item 7a)**

#### 9. **Vicar's Report**

- Following the Prime Minister's announcement TR anticipates re-opening the Church on Wednesdays and Saturdays for private prayer in the next week or two depending on advice. The next step will be to start leading zoom services from the church before inviting others in, hopefully by Easter.
- WTRRP are still using the church building for distributing food parcels.
- TR praised Cath's Ash Wednesday services both for the Evening service and for the Children's service.
- The Lent Course had gone well on Saturday with the Breakfast Connect group and TR encouraged all members to take part in a group.
- TR and JB recently attended a meeting with Bishop Michael of Hertford who spoke about work with Tanzania that the Diocese is involved in and the lessons that can be learned from this Asset Based Church Development (ABCD) approach. TR has written to the Bishop to say that he would like to be involved in this and that it might be part of our MAP.
- TR thanked all those who help with the technology for services.

#### 10. **Health and Safety Issues/Safeguarding**

No issues

#### 11. **Any Other Business**

- IJ reminded the Council that PM had previously requested figures about staffing.  
**Action:** PD to provide these figures by the next meeting
- The action about circulating the treasurer's job description and finding a replacement has not happened and needs following up.  
**Action:** TR to include this in the mail chimp newsletter
- AS asked if the new cooker could be purchased and installed, now that the work has been done in the kitchen and asked who would do this.

**Action:** TR to discuss this with the staff team at a Monday morning staff meeting

**12. Closing Prayer**

TR led the living God's Love prayer and closed the meeting at 9.10pm

Date of next meeting: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021