

Barnes Team Ministry
The Parish Church of St Mary Barnes

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on Monday 22 November 2010 at 7.50pm in the Ellerton Room

Present: Revd Richard Sewell in the Chair and the following members of the Council: Geoffrey Barnett, Phil Bladen, Peter Boyling, Lucy Brodie, Nick Bryant, Raymond Chapman, Celia Cleave, Rosie Findlater, Elena Fletcher, Christabel Gairdner, Vassos Georgiadis, Judy Gowing, Eddie Hartley, Juliet Hogan, Sarah Moore, Michael Murison, Anne Sullivan, David Thomas, Pippa Woodroffe.

Apologies: Loraine Budgen, Patrick Findlater, Paul Teverson.

Christabel Gairdner led Evening Prayer.

1. WELCOME

Richard welcomed members of the Council to his first meeting. The Council noted the resignation of Rose Robertson, who was unable to make the meetings. However she would still be playing a substantial role at St Mary's.

2. DESIGNATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Council approved the draft minutes of the meeting on 19 October 2010.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Peter noted that as planned we had undertaken the diocesan survey "signs of growth" earlier in the month, and over 150 members of the congregation had given their time to fill in the form after the services. We looked forward to seeing the analysis about Eastertime.

He added that the local authority had made a final decision to reverse in part the ban on parking outside the church. A few places would be available outside the lych gate, and a couple outside Olympic Studios, in the evenings and on Sundays. Several members of the congregation and he had pressed for more, but this was better than nothing.

He noted that members of the congregation should not approach the homeless visitor Gabriel if he reappeared in the churchyard, but ensure that a churchwarden knew of his arrival. The police were seeking means to move him permanently away from the church.

5. INTRODUCTION BY THE NEW RECTOR

Richard congratulated the churchwardens and the Council for the great team effort they had made during the interregnum. St Mary's was in a really good position to launch off to meet the challenges ahead. He was delighted to come to Barnes. He noted highlights in his career, including work with overseas churches in USPG; his non-residential ordination course; his training curacy at Putney; and his role as team vicar with the vibrant congregation at St Mark's Wimbledon for 5 years. His upbringing in Plymouth had been very influential in shaping his spirituality; and he recalled his time in Newham maintaining links between faith communities at the difficult time of the first Iraq war and the Salman Rushdie fatwa. His time in the family newspaper distribution business had taught him about efficient administration.

6. ST MARY'S: THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

Richard invited suggestions from members of the Council about what St Mary's existed for; and then what they expected of the role that he and the other clergy should play. He received a number of responses under each heading.

He promised to write up the points made, and ensure that they helped to shape our future agenda. It was important to know where we wanted to get to, by seeking to discern the ultimate purpose of our life under God, in order to shape our life and ministry. He had a great affinity with all the points made by PCC members. The role of the PCC was critical to the future of the church in sharing the joy of ministry. He was keen to share with us our convictions, experience and determination.

7. HEATING

a) building contract. Michael reported that only one of the five contractors invited to tender for the contract to install the new heating system had done so; he believed that the others thought the job too small. The contractor that had tendered, Star Walls, had bid a higher figure than we had been expecting, but had cut its bid in negotiation with the church. We were seeking other quotes, but the Treasurer was content that the finance would be available to fund the project at the level negotiated with Star Walls. The fabric committee therefore recommended that the PCC should now give authority for signing of a contract with Star Walls, but that the standing committee should be authorised to approve a lower bid should one of acceptable quality be received from an alternative contractor. The PCC agreed to this recommendation.

Peter added that the grand piano should be removed from the church during the works to protect it. We proposed to have some limited restoration works done to it during this period at a cost of £5000 (including VAT), which would ensure it retained its full quality and value (about £60,000). In addition the organ was overdue for a thorough clean and some minor restoration works. We envisaged that this also should be removed from the church during the works for this purpose. The work would best be done by the builder of the organ, who was quoting about £7,500 plus VAT. The Treasurer was content that these costs could also be funded from the available finances. The Council was content that the work should be done to both piano and organ.

b) plans for holding services during the closure of the church. Richard said that he had carefully considered options for holding services during the closure, including use of the Kitson Hall or joining one of the other churches of the Team in their services. After discussion with the wardens and with the clergy of the other churches he had concluded that we should use the Kitson Hall for the services on Sunday mornings. This would avoid creating an impression that St Mary's was completely closed. We would be in the Hall for only a few weeks from the start of February to Palm Sunday.

8. FINANCE

a) budget for 2011. On behalf of the Treasurer, Peter spoke to Patrick's proposed budget for 2011 which had been slightly revised from the version considered by the PCC at the last meeting. This was compiled on the basis of running forward our present expenditure policies until Richard had had time to consider future spending priorities. He noted that Richard had made a bid for a diocesan grant which was available to larger churches and which if approved would provide us an additional £4000 pa for the next three years. The PCC agreed to this proposed budget for 2011.

b) reserves policy. Peter reported Patrick's advice that the PCC should seek to hold reserves of about half our annual expenditure, ie £100,000. Patrick considered that we should aim to achieve this figure over the next two or three years, and that we were well on the way to do this with the surplus of over £45,000 he projected for 2010.

c) fees for 2011. Peter noted that the paper circulated for the meeting included all the fees that we were currently charging, including those for payment to the diocese. The only changes currently proposed were two small increases required by the Church of England for 2011 and an increase in the payment to the bellringers which had been decided at the Tower AGM in the spring. The PCC was content with these changes. Richard said that he wanted in due course to consider the levels of other fees, to ensure that those decided by the PCC were reasonable and fair; he would return to the Council with any proposals for change.

9. STAFFING ISSUES

- a) Parish Administrator. Richard said that Cheryl Cole had made an excellent start in her post, and she was a great asset to the church.
- b) Director of Music. Richard said that in the light of consultation with Chris Bucknall the outgoing Director of Music, and the discussion at the last PCC meeting, he had decided that we should offer the new Director an extra two hours per week to allow for greater attention to be given to developing the musical work with children. The advertisement would soon go out and he envisaged interviews in the new year.
- c) PCC Secretary. Richard sought a volunteer for the role of PCC Secretary, filled at present by Peter on a temporary basis. In discussion he favoured this remaining an unpaid role; and he agreed that we should advertise the post in the pewsheet.

10. REPORT ON EVENTS

Elena reported on a very successful Christmas Fair which had raised £8,500. She thanked all those who had played a role in making it happen. Richard thanked her for her leadership, saying that he had felt a tremendous atmosphere with an openhearted approach to the community.

Rosie reported on the Harries/Pullman debate and the Tim Rice concert; both had been terrific events, to which a number of non-members of the congregation had come. Richard undertook to write on behalf of the PCC to thank Bishop Richard Harries, Sue Adams and Andrew Summers for all their work on these events.

11. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

a) fabric committee

Michael reported that the committee was pursuing the issue of replacing the flat roof over the nave, which was reaching the end of its life. The committee favoured use of a modern material, which would be cheaper than the traditional alternative, and would seek the approval of the church architect. The committee was also planning to review our health and safety practices, look at refurbishment of the coffee making and washing up area in the Melvill Room and review our fuel contracts to get best value for money.

b) mission group

Nick Bryant said that this group was not currently meeting. Richard said that he would review the terms of reference and membership of the group and would consider arrangements for its next meeting. Celia offered to chair that meeting. At this, his last PCC meeting before he and his family left Barnes, Nick was warmly thanked for all his contributions, and Maria's, to St Mary's life.

c) deanery synod

Phil Bladen reported that the last meeting had re-elected him to the diocesan board of finance.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Richard recalled his invitation to members of the PCC to drinks at the Rectory on 3 December. People who had helped in the work parties on the Rectory, and office holders in the church, had also been invited. The event would begin at 6pm but continue on beyond 8pm if people wished to arrive later.

13. DATES OF PCC MEETINGS IN 2011

The Council noted the dates for meetings on 25 Jan, 1 March, 17 May, 19 July, 20 Sept, 18 Oct and 22 Nov.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be on 27 April.

The meeting concluded with the Grace.

