

Barnes Team Ministry
The Parish Church of St Mary Barnes

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on Tuesday 8 March 2011 at 7.50pm in the small hall of the Kitson Hall

Present: Revd Richard Sewell in the Chair and the following members of the Council: Geoffrey Barnett, Phil Bladen, Peter Boyling, Raymond Chapman, Celia Cleave, Patrick Findlater, Elena Fletcher, Vassos Georgiadis, Judy Gowing, Eddie Hartley, Sarah Moore, Michael Murison, Anne Sullivan, Paul Teverson, Pippa Woodroffe.

Apologies: Lucy Brodie, Loraine Budgen, Rosie Findlater, Christabel Gairdner, Juliet Hogan, David Thomas.

The Rector led Evening Prayer.

2. DESIGNATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

None

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Council approved the draft minutes of the meeting on 25 January 2011.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Richard said that he felt that holding services in the Hall during the church heating works was working very well: he had received lots of positive feedback. He thanked those who were helping with the organisation.

5. REFLECTIONS

Richard gave some reflections on his first three months as Rector:

- a. he and his family were grateful for the warm welcome they had received. People had gone out of their way to ensure they felt welcome. That meant a lot to clergy arriving in a parish. The same went for newcomers to the congregation. St Mary's had the feel of a welcoming church, and this approach should be nurtured;
- b. he had been impressed by the solidity of life at St Mary's, the sense of determination and rootedness. This was a testimony to the work of the PCC, wardens and many others;
- c. he had been amazed to find a large dynamic fringe round the congregation, a sign of an openhearted church. He was surprised and concerned that there were many who considered themselves members but did not come to church. We needed to consider how to draw them in;
- d. St Mary's was the most traditional church he had ever been part of. His churches had been on the creative edge and he had found that change was generally a positive thing. He hoped that people would value the changes he sought to make;
- e. he was deeply distressed by the absence of children and young people in church at the Parish Communion;
- f. place of prayer. It was wonderful that a number of us say Morning Prayer together each morning, but this approach does not permeate the whole life of the church. Prayer brings us all sorts of unseen blessings; and Christians should be characterised by the place that prayer plays in our lives. It was his intention that all our regular business meetings and other groups should begin with prayer;
- g. the team dimension in Barnes was fragile, and he understood the historical background. It would be his task to strengthen the team. The good bonds between the clergy needed to spread more widely;
- h. he had a sense that there were great opportunities here, and an openness to growth. With the support he had received from people in all the services he felt that there would be plenty of hands at the pump. He was excited by prospects for the future.

Richard was thanked for offering these reflections.

6. WOMEN BISHOPS

Richard introduced the issue, noting that the deanery synod sought comments from parishes on the current proposals for legislation, as regards provision for those who could not accept women bishops. He commended the leaflet "Women Bishops: understanding the arguments" written by Canon Jane Steen and Revd Mark Steadman, which explained the background.

In discussion it was noted that we are a parish and PCC which are fully supportive of the ministry of women priests. It was suggested that there seemed nothing about women bishops that should cause us to want to backtrack, though the point was made that new issues did arise over the position of bishops.

In respect of provision to accommodate those who opposed the consecration of women, members discussed the alternatives of avoiding or providing detailed legislative certainty. On the one hand there was a case for relying on mutual trust, and the respect of sensitivities: there was legal experience that overdetailed law rarely produces the desired results, and it was better to have structures that provide for discretion to be used with grace. On the other hand it was argued that there had been a lack of goodwill so far from the supporters of women bishops; so there was a need for something firmer than a Code of Practice to back up the goodwill and ensure that opponents of women bishops had the honoured place envisaged for those who could not accept women priests. It was accepted that there had been a lack of charity and generosity on both sides, but there was a need to find a way forward.

The Council heard comments about the impact of the policy on relationships with other denominations. The Roman Catholic church was continuing dialogue with the Anglican Communion, although some Anglican provinces already consecrated women. In response though it was suggested that the Roman Catholic church was now retreating from the past advances in relationships.

It was agreed that a draft statement of the PCC position would be circulated to members. Comments on the text would be welcome, as well as any proposals for amendment of the current position reached in General Synod.

Note: the text finally approved and sent to Deanery Synod was:

"St Mary Barnes PCC strongly supports the decision to consecrate women as bishops as a positive step forward towards the full inclusion of women at every level of church life. We affirm the need for arrangements to be put in place for those who cannot accept this step which enables them to continue to hold a valued place within the Church of England. We believe that the Draft Measure allows for the right sort of monitored flexibility to enable this. We deeply hope that people with opposing views on this matter will be able to deal graciously with one another."

7. WORSHIP

Richard reported that combined services of all age worship would be held on 27 March and Palm Sunday, the former to be followed by drinks and nibbles to say goodbye to Chris Bucknell. The form of service would differ from the standard services. Pippa undertook to coordinate provision of the nibbles. The Easter services would be slightly different this year, and would be publicised soon.

He would be arranging a new print of the service booklets, to take on board changes already made and certain new ones. One change at the Parish Communion would be introduction of the modern wording of the Lord's Prayer, which was already used at the 11.30 service and Morning Prayer. St Mary's was the first church he had served in to continue to use the traditional wording, and most churches and CofE schools used the new form. Members of the congregation could continue to say the old form if they wished.

8. CHILDREN

Richard said that he was consulting parents about provision for nurturing the faith of children. He was already clear that we needed to reintroduce Sunday School for those between 7 and 11

alongside the Parish Communion; and he had received offers of help for a rota to run it. The 11.30 service could not meet the needs of those over 7 at the same time as serving the younger ones. He hoped to launch Sunday School in the summer term.

Members commented that Sunday mornings were tricky for them, given the clash with children's sports. Could there be a Saturday evening event? Phil recalled that such a service had been introduced very successfully in Richmond. Richard recognised the problem on Sunday morning, but could not see a solution, though we needed to keep flexibility. He would enquire into the Richmond experience.

9. YOUTH

Richard would be meeting members of the congregation shortly to hear their views about the form of provision for young people over the age of 11.

10. COMMITTEES

a) Mission Group: Celia reported on the meeting on 31 January. She noted that charities we had supported in the past were in dire need of funding and she hoped that recommendations would soon come to the PCC. Consideration was being given to the future strategy for mission at St Mary's. The Bishop's Lent Call was for the church in Zimbabwe; she hoped that the congregation would respond well. Richard said that funding from the churches in our diocese was a significant factor in supporting the morale of the Zimbabwe church.

Geoffrey announced that the Castelnu Centre Project had been commissioned by the local authority to run youth provision in North Barnes from 1 April on a three year contract. This was very exciting news as it would enable CCP to support young people throughout their schooling, and help address the problems of unemployed young people. CCP had found an excellent person to be the youth work manager, and expected to be able to appoint three support workers shortly.

b) Think Tank issues: Richard reported that a Stewardship programme was planned for this year, and a more thorough exercise would be developed for next year. He wished to work on the Mission Action Plan with the PCC at an all day meeting he proposed for 17 September; PCC members agreed that this date would be feasible for them. He congratulated the organisers of the Quiz Night the previous weekend for a most enjoyable evening.

c) Fabric: Michael reminded the PCC that the architect had again recorded in the quinquennial report last year the need to replace the nave flat roof which was at the end of its life. A replacement would again be of asphalt but with a layer of insulation. Two quotes had been obtained and we were seeking a third. Of the two we have, the cheaper (by some distance) is from Darlings, who are highly recommended by the church architect. They expect the new roof to last for 40 years. The cost would be about £16,000 plus VAT. The diocese recommend we pay for a guarantee; Darling offer a 10 year guarantee at a cost of about £1000, but the diocese suggest a longer period so the cost could be higher. The overall cost could be found from within the quinquennial fund.

On a proposal of Geoffrey, seconded by Judy, and with all in favour, the Council: resolved that a faculty should be sought for this work; authorised acceptance of the Darling quote, unless the third quote were better value; and instructed the fabric committee to seek a guarantee of more than 10 years.

Michael added that the heating works were continuing; and quotations were being sought for a list of other work. It was suggested to him that when the Melvill Room was full it was very noisy and there was a case for putting acoustic tiles on the ceiling; he agreed to consider this.

11. FINANCE

Patrick sought approval of the 2010 annual accounts. The figures were those which the PCC had seen at the last meeting. He also sought approval of the formal annual report which would cover the 2010 accounts when submitted to the Charity Commission. On a proposal of Michael, seconded by Phil, the Council approved unanimously the accounts and the report.

12. APPOINTMENTS

Richard reminded the Council that the post of PCC Secretary needed to be filled. He added that the first Sunday for Daniel Turner, our new director of music, would be 3 April. Daniel was excited at the prospect of working with us, and would be a great asset.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

14. DATES OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- APCM – 27 April. It was agreed that we should publicise this well.
- all day PCC – 17 September (replacing the planned meeting of 20 September) to discuss the Mission Action Plan
- PCC meeting dates in 2011; 17 May, 19 July, 17 Sept, 18 Oct and 22 Nov.

The meeting concluded with the Grace.

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9.3.11