

The Barnes Team Ministry
The Parish Church of St Mary, Barnes

THE ANNUAL MEETINGS

Minutes of the Meetings held in the Church on Wednesday, 30 April 2008 at 8 pm

Present: The Rector (the Rev'd Ross Collins) in the chair, the Churchwardens and 54 members of the parish.

The Rector thanked Juliet Hogan and all contributors for their work in preparing the displays of the church's activities, which had been enjoyed by a number of the parish over the previous two hours.

A EASTER VESTRY

For the purpose of electing churchwardens to serve for the coming year.

Nominations for churchwardens had been received as follows:

Fiona Barnett, proposed by Vic Nolan and seconded by Alan Reay

Peter Boyling, proposed by Giles Dimock and seconded by Marilyn Walker.

There being no other nominations, these two people were elected churchwardens for the coming year. The Rector thanked Phil Bladen and Fiona Barnett for their work as wardens over the last year. He particularly thanked Phil Bladen as he retired after six years as a model warden: he had been a great support through his immense knowledge, loyalty and sound advice.

B THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 April 2007

The minutes had been displayed on the porch notice board for the past year and also reproduced in the 2008 Annual Report. The meeting unanimously approved them as a true record on a proposal of Iain Radford, seconded by Michael Murison.

2. Church Electoral Roll

Peter Boyling reported on behalf of Peter Kain, the Electoral Roll Officer. There were 330 people on the roll. This was an increase of 48 on the 2007 Roll. Of the 330, 216 were resident within St Mary's boundary (an increase of 26). Of those non resident within the parish, 52 were resident within the boundaries of the other two churches of the Team Ministry (an increase of 7) and 62 outside.

3. Elections

(a) Deanery Synod (to serve for three years)

Nominations had been received as follows:

Joan Wheeler-Bennett, proposed by Geoffrey Barnett and seconded by Peter Boyling

Phil Bladen, proposed by Peter Boyling and seconded by Wendy Kyrle-Pope

Harry Powell, proposed by Richard du Parcq, and seconded by Christabel Gairdner

Michael Murison, proposed by Judy Gowing and seconded by Phil Bladen.

No other nominations were received at the meeting and the above were elected.

(b) Parochial Church Council (for five representatives to serve for three years).

The following nominations had been received:

Vassos Georgiadis, proposed by Peter Boyling and seconded by Helen Bladen
Lucy Brodie, proposed by Phil Bladen and seconded by Emma Powell
Anne Sullivan, proposed by Helen Bladen and seconded by Emma Powell
Geoffrey Barnett, proposed by Alan Reay and seconded by Wendy Kyrle-Pope
Elena Fletcher, proposed by Andrew Summers and seconded by Sally Copland.

There were no further nominations and these persons were elected unanimously.

(c) Election of Sidesmen for 2008-2009

Those people listed in the Annual Report were those proposed for the following year, namely: David Barrie, David Blacklock, Claire Boyling, Brian and Celia Cleave, Tony Dundas, Patrick Findlater, Ken and Tiziana George, Charles Goldsmith, David Heyhoe, Ken Hitchcock, Wendy Kyrle-Pope, Desmond and Josephine MacDermott, Alistair Mackie, Alan Mitchell, Nick Phillips, Ferelith Reay, Peter Siddall, Fiona Smith, Andrew Summers, Joan Wheeler-Bennett, Jonathan and Emma Wilson and Marjorie Wing. Election of these persons was approved unanimously.

(d) Appointment of a representative on the executive of Churches Together in Barnes

Phil Bladen proposed that Rosie Findlater be a St Mary's representative on the executive committee of Churches Together in Barnes. The meeting approved her appointment unanimously.

4. Finance

Richard du Parcq, PCC Hon Treasurer, reported on the accounts for 2007. He noted that income had been unusually high. This resulted from three exceptional factors: St Mary's had supported our Under Tree Schools mission project by claiming Gift Aid on its behalf before it became a registered charity; there had been a specific donation of £19,000 for funding our Family Service pastor; and there had been two substantial legacies and a large donation. Along with valuable increases in income from church events, lettings and weddings this had transformed the state of our General Reserve, which had risen from £15,000 at the start of the year to £70,000 at the end.

He suggested that the exceptional income gave a useful breathing space while we raised total giving to the levels needed for the future, including to meet increasing payments to the diocese. At present our giving was half the levels the diocese recommended. He commended the new appeal to the congregation.

He would over the coming year be seeking to reduce the number of designated funds which complicated accounting.

Andrew Summers proposed the adoption of the accounts, seconded by Monty Brown, and this proposal was carried unanimously. The Rector thanked the Treasurer warmly for his hard work on the finances throughout the year.

5. 2010 Stewardship Appeal

Geoffrey Barnett announced an appeal to the congregation for £225,000 to meet those anticipated costs of St Mary's to the end of 2010 that were not covered by existing levels of committed giving. There

were three changes to the standard appeals we had been running in the past:

- we would be focussing on the 300 or more members of St Mary's who did not at present have regular financial commitments to the church;
- we would take a three year view to end 2010;
- we would celebrate those who gave regularly, by publishing a list of the names of those who agreed to publicity.

Committed givers had been sent a preview of this appeal, which would begin immediately.

In answer to questions and comments he noted that we would keep the appeal refreshed over its life; there would continue to be an annual invitation to review levels of giving; he agreed that a commitment to regular giving was an objective; and he endorsed the comment that we should continue to publicise the opportunity to leave a legacy to St Mary's. It was also suggested that committed givers be reminded of the amount that they were giving.

The Rector thanked Geoffrey for the concept and leadership of the appeal, and thanked the congregation for their existing commitments to St Mary's.

6. Appointment of an Auditor

It was noted that under new legislation we would need an independent examiner for the 2008 accounts. The meeting agreed to delegate to the PCC the appointment of a suitable person.

7. Rector's review of the year

The Rector noted that after his recent visit to Zimbabwe he had been summoned for a meeting with Bishop Tom. In the meeting the Bishop had commented that he couldn't think of a better parish in the diocese than St Mary's or a better Team Ministry than Barnes. He had considered that the clergy team would be the envy of many cathedrals; and he had felt that the manner of St Mary's representations to the diocese on the potential future impact on parishes of increasing levels of payments to the diocese had been constructive and loyal. The Rector thanked all the members of the clergy team for their great contributions to St Mary's life; and he added that the Bishop could not have known how impressive also was the lay leadership at St Mary's.

The Rector suggested that attendances at St Mary's were good, we had a range of activities which were going well, our finances had been swelled, including by the second Barnes Charity Ball, our support of our main mission projects had risen to a new level, and there was a range of ages, backgrounds and interests represented in the congregation. He felt that the congregation was at ease with itself, and that they found St Mary's a place of reflection and prayer, where they could refocus. All this was essential.

He now encouraged reflection on the diversity of our lives outside the church, and in particular on how church life should be relevant to our outside lives, such as bringing up children, our employment, the way we spent our money. He also asked for a discussion of how we should engage with the broader church, eg in Zimbabwe or Southern Sudan and with other faiths, eg Islam. Could we define ourselves by our involvement in the world, using our resources, which were higher than most other churches had available?

The meeting broke into groups to discuss what should be done at St Mary's to meet our own needs, and what opportunities there were for us to play a role in Barnes and the wider world. Reconvening, the Rector said that all the comments which had been made would be collated and studied by the PCC to produce a plan for the future.

He invited immediate comments on key points made in discussion. Responses included the following.
As to our needs we should:

- have a constant focus on communication, eg through the website
- be prepared to ask people to take on the tasks that needed to be done
- stimulate more interaction between the 10am and 11.30am congregations
- hear more of what the young people in church were doing
- welcome more space/silences in the services
- seek to strengthen the prayer group.

As to opportunities to have a larger role in Barnes and the wider world:

- we should advertise ourselves more widely in Barnes
- we could take a bigger role in FiSH (though we may not realise the scale of the current involvement of church members)
- for many of us our main world was the world of work
- we could twin with another body outside Barnes.

8. Any Other Business

Andrew Summers expressed his great appreciation of all the Rector was doing in his leadership of the church. The meeting strongly endorsed these thanks.

9. Date of Next Meeting

This was remitted to the PCC for a decision.

PB 1 May 2008 (2)

The Rector's Address follows on the next two pages

**BARNES TEAM MINISTRY
ST MARY'S CHURCH
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 2008
RECTOR'S ADDRESS**

After my recent trip to Zimbabwe, I was asked to see the Bishop of Southwark where I was to talk to him about it. During the conversation, he observed to me that he could not think of a better parish or team than St Mary's and the Barnes Team. Amongst other things, he said that the clergy team we have would be the envy of many cathedrals in England, let alone parishes. I'd very much agree with that, though I'd add what Bishop Tom cannot know, that the broader team of people in St Mary's is very impressive too. I also know the Diocese was impressed at the way we handled our recent discussion about the level of the parish share that we pay to the Diocese. We submitted a very positive motion through the Deanery which raised the question of the long-term impact of increasing parish shares and, in the conversations with the Diocese that followed, we were felt to have adopted a constructive and loyal (as well as effective) tone. That itself encouraged the Diocese to respond with a new scheme awarding grants to parishes under which we have already benefited.

It is good to know that we have been noticed and that what we do is appreciated. It also reminds us of the broader context in which we worship and serve. From a purely internal point of view, St Mary's and the Barnes Team are both going well. Attendances are good. There is a broad range of activities that are thriving from the Good Companions to the choir. Financially, the year has been good, with our bottom line being swelled by a generous donation, a couple of legacies and the great success of the second Barnes Charity Ball. Our connections with the Castelnaud Centre project and the Under Tree Schools in Southern Sudan have gone on to new levels.

No community is perfect, but I believe we are a community of very different ages and interests which feels at ease with itself. For most of us, St Mary's represents a place of reflection and prayer, a space away from the rush of our lives in which we can refocus, a sacred place where we encounter and worship the divine. All this is very important – essential even.

However, when I reflect on the diversity of our lives outside, I wonder how connected our life inside St Mary's is with the broad range of our involvement outside. We have family concerns – how to bring up children in a very different world to the one in which we grew up ourselves; how to deal with the difference in values and beliefs between generations and find moral standpoints that we share. Professionally, how can we find a spirituality and ethical framework that can relate to life in the City – in finance, law or media, amongst other things; does our faith stand outside that? Financially, with all the pressures on our income, how we can use money to express our values and what is important to us rather than let it dictate to

us. In the broader church, how we understand ourselves as related to fellow Christians in, say, Zimbabwe, and Southern Sudan; whether we feel ourselves as part of part of the Anglican Communion or believe that to be an artificial or remote construct. In this country, as well as elsewhere in the world, much discussion happens around our relationship (or lack of it) with Islam; many feel the Islamic presence in this country quite threatening; others think we have a duty as the established church (with its responsibility for addressing spiritual needs beyond its own immediate concerns) to encourage links.

As we move into the future, I am sure we will continue to thrive as a worshipping community and as a parish church. The question for me is whether we have the will to go beyond that and become much more of a church which defines itself by its place in our broader lives and the world and issues around and which, in turn, helps to define how these lives, world and issues are viewed. Certainly, we have the resources in terms of the people we have here and the connections we already have. We have opportunities as a church, as the Bishop of Southwark recognizes, that few, if any, churches in the Diocese have. This is my introduction to the discussion I am delighted you will take part in tonight. It is designed to find out from you your thoughts on who we are as a church, what is important, what we might do to help you in your lives here and outside, and to ask what issues outside you believe we should engage with more and how we should do so.

I will let you split up into groups of half a dozen or so to discuss the questions we have given you to stimulate your thoughts. After 20 minutes, we will reconvene and I will look forward to hearing what you have come up with.