

**ST MARY'S RIVERHEAD with DUNTON GREEN**

**MINUTES**

**Meeting of the Parochial Church Council  
Monday 9 March 2010  
In the Church Hall**

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**PRESENT:**

The Reverend Paul Francis – in the Chair

Jane Edwards, Norma Bridgland, Diane Williams, Mark Merson, Ronnie Todd,  
Martyn Berry, Jeannette Francis, Doris Gosnold, Lee Kings, Anne Straight, Sarah Stott, Andrew Tawse  
& Joanna Tawse Robin Tonge, Lynn Wilson, Jean Woods

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**1. Opening Prayers**

The meeting began with worship.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Audrey Bernardi, Anne Bourne, Miranda Cormack, Yemesi Howitt,  
Tim Johnston, Barry Sharp, Ursula Warner

**3. Minutes of 11 January 2010**

The Minutes of 11 January 2010 were approved and signed by the Vicar as a true copy.

**4. Matters arising from PCC Meeting 11 January 2010**

- i) Churchyard Faculty –Diane Williams reported that the post is in the process of being installed.
- ii) Church Office Space – Diane Williams reported that Chris Raynor has been to have a look at the possibility of converting the balcony with the organ speakers into office space. He has given an estimate of his charges. Cope & Hart have been contacted about moving the speakers. Robin Tonge had a long conversation with them. One proposal was to raise the four speakers off the ground -above the window – and to install a glazed panel immediately above the choir vestry, to cover the lower half of the balcony overlooking the pews, with an acoustic curtain above it, so as not to impede transmission of the speakers towards the east end of the church. It was agreed that it would not be a good idea to have the speakers mounted above the choir vestry as they would be very prominent and new ones would be very expensive. The speakers must be kept on the NW corner to keep the balance of sound from the organ.

A discussion ensued and it was agreed that the subject should be raised at the APCM to determine people's feelings on the large amount of money which would be needed to convert the balcony to an office. The advantages would be that church papers could be kept in an accessible place for all church officers and the church could be kept open during weekdays when there is someone using the office.

- iii) Sevenoaks Christian Counselling Service - The Vicar informed the PCC that each church in Sevenoaks has been asked to raise £500 for SCCS as they are in urgent need of funds. It was agreed to send them £500 and to raise the money in retrospect.
- iv) HopeFest – Audrey Bernardi had attended the debriefing but unfortunately was not at the PCC meeting to give a report. The PCC noted that most of the attendees had tended to be church people.

- v) Lent Course – The Vicar reported that the course is going well.
- vi) Vacant Posts
 

Treasurer - Elaine Hanham has agreed to take over from Mark Merson.

Sunday School Leader - David Holmes has agreed to help out with the leadership but does not want to take over from Lynn.

Church Warden - Norma Bridgland is due to stand down. No one has come forward to replace her to date.

Independent Examiner (Accounts) – Elaine is currently our independent examiner and will need to be replaced when she takes on the Treasurer's role.
- vii) Ash Wednesday – The Vicar asked the PCC for their thoughts on the inclusion of the Ash Wednesday service in the Sunday morning service. The PCC gave a positive response. It was agreed that a few people still preferred the evening service. It was suggested that perhaps we could have a Wednesday evening and a Sunday service next year and more people may attend the evening service as they now know what to expect.
- viii) Fairtrade Big Brew – Anne Straight reported that 23 people attended. A profit of £25.25 was made. Photos had been taken and will be on the TraidCraft website. An article is to be put in the magazine.
- ix) Helping Hands – There was no report as Audrey Bernardi was not at the meeting.

## 5. Events Team Report

Sarah Stott reported there had been a meeting with Caroline Johnston, Lynn Wilson, Doris Gosnold and Sarah as the team members. Margaret Nicholas will also be on the team but was unable to join that particular meeting. They intend to try and involve others. The Events for 2010 are:

21 March	Bereavement service – tea and cakes afterwards
26 March	NWF service and light lunch
31 March	Passover supper
4 April	Easter morning walk and breakfast
13 June	Dunton Green Fun Day
Date TBA	Vicarage BBQ
15 August	Patronal festival with wine and nibbles
19 September	Riverhead Carnival
2 October	Harvest supper
11 December	Christmas social

## 6. Financial Report and Accounts for 2009

Mark Merson had circulated the financial statements and notes to the statements prior to the meeting. He went through the specific funds and pointed out that this year we have spent more than we have received, mostly due to reduced interest income on deposits held, reflecting lower interest rates, and no legacies in 2009.

Mark went on to explain that the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations, applicable accounting standards and the Charities SORP 2005. He then read out a new reserves policy as follows:

The PCC maintains resources that are adequate to enable it to meet its charitable objectives. The PCC maintains the following reserves in support of these objectives:

**General fund reserves** comprising surpluses accrued from previous years. The PCC generally seeks to generate neither surplus nor deficit. General fund reserves are held in current and deposit accounts. They are significantly lower than budgeted annual expenditure and are considered adequate, but not excessive.

**Designated and restricted fund reserves** comprise amounts designated or collected for particular purposes. Designated and restricted fund reserves are held in common with general fund reserves. Principal reserves comprise repair funds which are designated on the advice of diocesan quinquennial assessors.

The nature and uses of **the parish trust fund** are set out in note 3 to the financial statements.

Mark told the PCC that the government believes that charities have reserves which should be disbursed. However, Mark did not believe that our reserves would be subject to criticism as yet. He confirmed that no application was made on the Parish Trust Fund in 2009.

The PCC should be aware that the church accounts are governed by Charity Law and this does affect how the Church spends its funds.

It was then reported by Mark that in 2010 we have recently received a legacy from the Revd Howard Ellsley. No one on the PCC knew the name. A note will be put in the min-mag in case someone may have known him.

The Vicar thanked Mark for all his hard work on the Accounts over the year.

The PCC approved the Financial Statements for distribution in advance of the APCM, including the reserves notes read out by the Treasurer.

## **7. 3 G's Stewardship Campaign**

The Vicar informed the meeting that the sub-committee had met with Alan Strachan.

## **8. Christian Aid Partnership Scheme**

Christian Aid are setting up a campaign to involve churches in raising funds for overseas development funds, a minimum of £5000 is needed then the EU have agreed to triple the total of any funds raised. After some discussion it was agreed that we should be involved. The Vicar is attending a meeting on the subject and will report back; churches can work with each other to raise the required amount.

## **9. Arrangements for Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

The Vicar reported that arrangements are in hand for the APCM. Unfortunately the APCM date clashes with a leadership training conference he is co-leading in Bruges and he will need to leave the meeting at 12 noon. He asked the Church Wardens to close the meeting if it hasn't ended by the time he has to leave.

## **10. Any Other Business**

Church Hall – The Vicar read out Margaret Nicholas's report from January and pointed out that the church seems to have lost its advantage of using the hall due to outside bookings. In particular, he was unable to book the hall for Reader Training on a Saturday recently. The Vicar thought that the PCC needs to have a policy on use of the hall. The PCC were in agreement that people who have regular hall bookings should be told that their slot may be needed once or twice a year for church meetings.

Congregation Numbers – Tim Johnston had sent an email about his concerns of declining numbers in Church. It was particularly noticeable at the family service on 7 March. Tim would like it to be a regular item on the PCC Agenda for discussion. The Vicar said that there had been gradual decline over the ten years he had been at St Mary's. He suggested that it was something to be looked at as part of the 3 G's Campaign.

Sense – We have been approached by the charity Sense to hold bags of bric-a-brac for them as bags are being stolen from people's doorsteps. They would give us £6 for each bag of clothing held and £3 for each bag of other items. The Vicar agreed to email the charity to find out how often they collect from the area before we make a decision.

St. Mary's Church, Chart – This particular church had written to all churches named St. Mary's in the area asking for donations to help with funding for their new church roof. The vicar noted that we had sent them a donation of £10 and we have received a letter of thanks.

Church Repairs –Diane reported on various small repairs which were being attended to inside the church.

World Women's Day of Prayer – Sarah Stott advised the PCC that this had been a lovely service and 14 people from St Mary's had attended.

The meeting ended with prayer at 21.42