

# ST MARY RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN

## MINUTES

### Meeting of the Parochial Church Council

Tuesday 26 January 2016

8.00pm in the Church Hall

#### PRESENT:

Vicar - In the Chair

Diane Williams, Stuart Wigley, Ronnie Todd

Martyn Berry, Jill Dickenson, Beryl Ellinor, Doris Gosnold, Karen Forster-Pearce, Daphne Harrison, Nicola Joyce, Margaret Nicholas, Bennet Smith, Anne Straight; Lynne Wilson

#### 1. Passage of Scripture & Prayers

The Vicar opened the meeting with a bible reading and prayer.

#### 2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Audrey Bernardi, John Curtis, Margaret Curtis, Denis Williams,

#### 3. Approval of Minutes 24 November 2015

The Minutes of the meeting 24 November were agreed and signed as a true copy by the Vicar.

#### 4. Matters Arising

- i) Christmas cards - Bennet Smith to report to the PCC at the next meeting.
- ii) Projector - A new projector and screen has been purchased and was £2 under budget.
- iii) Morning of Prayer: This will go ahead between 10-12 Saturday, 30 January, on a drop-in basis. Caroline Rink will bring along various props and crafts for visitors to use for prayer and reflection. She will not be charging for her time. The PCC agreed to offer a donation of £50 to a charity of her choice.

#### 5. Finance

Stuart Wigley gave the report.

He has spoken to the Diocese and offered a figure lower than requested as our annual parish contribution. We will not need to use our reserves as a result. The amount will be increased if we find ourselves in a position to do so. The sum, expressed as a percentage of our income, is consistent with our contributions over the last six years. The Vicar thanked Stuart.

#### 6. Church Fabric Committee

Diane Williams reported on behalf of the CFC.

**Church Roof Repairs:** The roof has been inspected; the builder looked into the roof space and will be monitoring the interim repair. Diane will ask the Diocese if the Quinquennial inspection by Chris Rayner may be brought forward so that we are able make a solid case when submitting a revised bid for the second round of grants from the LPWF. Chris Rayner should then be able to have a report ready by 5 February which will be in time for us to submit our bid for a grant. Chris Rayner will decide if we need a structural engineer to inspect the organ loft to assess whether it will support shelves for speakers which will need to be erected for the new organ.

**Memorial Benches:** We have received several requests for benches to be erected around the churchyard as a legacy in memory of loved ones. Sadly, we do not have enough space for this to continue. The PCC agreed that we should try and find some other way to use legacies left to the church which might, for example, include some kind of a plaque in memory of the loved one.

This may need a Diocesan Faculty, however. The Fabric Committee will look into this and other options.

## **7. Events**

**Christmas Tree Festival** - No one has come forward to replace Elaine Hanham in organising the Christmas Tree Festival.

**Women's World Day of Prayer** - We are still in need of representatives from St Mary's to replace Elaine Hanham and Sarah Stott..

These 'vacancies' will continue to be advertised in our Notice Sheet. If people do not come forward, we may not be able to hold or participate in these events.

## **8. Outreach & Mission**

Daphne Harrison gave a presentation to the PCC originating from her course and relating to five values of Mission Shaped churches.

Mission is God's work, calling people – saying "Come!" and Evangelism is God saying "Go!" to the people who answer His Call.

Evangelism is simply people being God's messengers and taking His same message of love to anyone and everyone.

Some of the people in the New Testament answered Christ's call into a new transforming relationship with Him, and after His Resurrection and Ascension, took up the challenge to "Go" and pass on the Good News - Jesus, His Life, Death and Resurrection. We saw how they understood that they had also come into a new relationship with each other, because they had all become God's children. So they became a living, vibrant unit, which became known as the Church.

The Bible's view of the church; a body, with Christ as its Head, a family with God as its Father, a vine with Christ as the Vine and the church as the branches, a marriage with Christ as the Bridegroom and the Church as the Bride etc.

Because those early Christians, and many generations since, had heard and answered God's Call to "Come" and with the Holy Spirit's help and in His strength, had been prepared to "Go" and pass on the Gospel, we are all here today as Christians and as part of God's Church.

A "Mission-shaped church" or a "Missionary church" is simply a church that understands and responds to God's call to "Come" and hears and obeys God's command to "Go".

The five values of mission shaped churches beg a lot of obvious questions about whether we agree or not, and ask how we do things etc. Sometimes it is really helpful to stand back and ask what we're doing and why.

Daphne then asked for comments and views from the PCC.

Some observations were that the building is known by everyone but what does it mean to them and what do they want from the church? How do we reach out to the community?

The Christmas tree festival and, in particular, the short carol service, together with the Christingle services, are very popular. They all attract people who are not regular church goers. It is as if people are looking for more than the material aspects of Christmas, i.e. the true meaning of Christmas.

The Vicar pointed out that the baptism wording has been updated in the hope that it will help families to better understand the true meaning of baptism.

Several questions arose from the resultant discussion:

How do we attract more in at Easter?

Should we be *inviting* people to come into the church?

Should we actively be publicising "Back to Church Sunday"? Inviting our friends and neighbours.

Should we give newcomers someone to sit with so that they are made to feel welcome?

How do we appeal to people who are looking for something new or different?

At the end of the discussion the Vicar suggested we give members of the congregation a questionnaire asking positive questions such as what do they like about the church and is there is anything in particular they would like to see in addition to what is offered. We could also include a piece in the Easter card so that it reaches the wider community, asking what they think of St Mary's and inviting them to look at our website.

Daphne will prepare a questionnaire for the congregation and Margaret Nicholas and Bennet Smith will prepare the Easter Card.

## **9. Church Services**

**Ash Wednesday** - 10<sup>th</sup> February

**Maundy Thursday** - Stripping of the altar and vigil. No meal on this occasion.

## **10. Church Music**

We have had some response to the Vicar's plea for additional choir members; which is very much appreciated.

## **11. Sunday School**

Nicola Joyce reported that they are trying to draw up a rota of helpers for Sunday School. Parents do come in with their children but we still need people to sign up to the rota. The Sunday School continues to successfully cater for a good number of children but it would be great to have a more regular list of helpers.

## **12. Teenagers**

St Lukes , St Mary's Kippington and St Mary's Riverhead are looking into the feasibility of funding a Youth, Family and Schools Worker to work with all three churches.

A meeting to discuss this possibility was held for members of the three churches and several of our PCC members attended.

It was a very interesting meeting. A youth worker from St Matthews Church in High Brooms, Tunbridge Wells, had been invited to talk of his work. Each church was asked to discuss the opportunity at their PCC meetings and provide feedback.

The PCC were appraised of the content of the meeting by those who had attended. After some discussion it was felt that St Mary's Riverhead needs to define what our church would expect from the youth worker. It was agreed there is definitely a need for something for the older children to progress to once they move on from Sunday School. However, we did not think, at present, that we have enough children of that age to justify the expense of a trained youth worker. Therefore, it was agreed we should be investing in our current group of younger Sunday School children in readiness for their future.

The possibility to resurrect the idea of making one of the gallery rooms accessible as a safe place for teenagers to meet was put forward, especially as the speakers from the old Copeman Hart organ will be removed once we have the new organ in place. The area could be screened off. The PCC concluded that this is something we should be considering as an alternative for upcoming teenagers rather than investing in a youth worker at present.

The Vicar will convey the PCC's views to the Rural Dean.

## **13. Any Other Business**

**Church Hall Door Bell** - Margaret Nicholas has received a request for a door bell so that the door may be locked when groups are using the hall. Any late comers would be able to press the bell to gain entry. It would be paid for by church hall funds. The PCC were all in agreement.

**Deanery Synod** - The next meeting of the Sevenoaks Deanery will be on 4 February.

**Church Cleaner** - Margaret Nicholas reported that she has a potential church cleaner who is a member of the congregation.

**Personal Injury Claims** - Stuart Wigley has received a letter and flow chart from our Insurers to help us if and when we need to make a personal injury claim. He will leave the chart at the back of the church.

**Digitising the Parish Register** - The PCC were all happy for the Parish Register to be digitised.

**Easter Eggs** - It was agreed by the PCC that Anne Straight and Bennet Smith will decide where to purchase Easter eggs.

**Crib Trail** - Anne Straight had been to a meeting of the Crib Trail sub-group where a discussion took place on the success of the new venture. It was agreed to repeat it next year. Flyers for the 2015 crib trail were donated by St John's URC. If we are to participate in 2016 then we may need to make a donation. The PCC were all happy for St Mary's to be included again this year.

**Garden of Remembrance** - Margaret Nicholas reported that she has a volunteer to help with the garden.

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

Standing Committee: Tuesday 23 February 2016

PCC: Tuesday 8 March 2016