



Minutes of the meeting of the United Church Council Held on Monday 14 November 2016

Present: Andrew Bond, David Carruthers, Petra Hedges, David Hibbert, Sue Johnson, Rob Kay, Revd Richard Lowson, June Poppleton, Darryl Sharp, Revd Deborah Snowball

The meeting was chaired by the Vicar.

1) Deborah opened the meeting with prayer.

2) **Apologies for absence** were received from: Heather Allum, Jane Earl, David Edney, Sue Hillier, John Rhodes, Revd Scott Talbott

3) Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2016

Minor amendments were made to the Minutes: Sue Hillier had attended the meeting; the spelling of Rob Kay's name was corrected (item 6)

The Minutes were then agreed and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

4) Matters arising

July minutes:

a) Financial report (item 5): The Retention Fee has still not been claimed or paid to PAYE.

b) Car park (item 9b): The application to list the former church car park as a local community asset under the Localism Act had been turned down. It was suggested that TRDC be approached with respect to the provision of parking for disabled users.

August minutes:

c) Work in the chancel will start in January 2017.

September minutes:

d) Bicycle racks (item 7b(i)): The Archdeacon's Letter of Permission has been received and work will go ahead to install these.

e) Path to Church Centre from east end (item 7b(iii)): Work will commence shortly.

f) Events Committee (item 8b): The Events Committee will merge with the Community & Outreach Committee. Some members of the Events Committee will be co-opted on to the C&O Committee.

Action: DJS will write to thank the members of the Events Committee for their work over the years

5) Correspondence

a) A Legacy of £10,000 had been received from the Estate of the late Maurice Such. It was suggested that this be used to purchase a new set of vestments and falls.

b) An anonymous Legacy of £20,000 had been received. The family of the deceased would like to know how the money is spent in due course.

c) Deanery MAP group: A request had been received from the Convenor of this group for each church to talk with other denominations in their parish to facilitate sharing information about activities.

Action: Petra Hedges will undertake this for St Mary's

6) Financial report

a) **Present financial situation:**

	12/09/2016	14/09/2016
Current & Deposit	£41,000	£72,000
Epworth (Myers bequest)	£210,000	£210,000
Church Centre	£23,000	£23,000

- b) **Budget for 2017:** This had previously been circulated. It was noted that there was a planned deficit of £14,000. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Budget be accepted (proposed: Rob Kay; Seconded: Andrew Bond).

7) UCC sub-committees

Minutes of the August Meetings of the sub-committees had previously been circulated.

a) Community & Outreach Committee

- i) **Festive evening (25 November):** David Carruthers will coordinate this and requested people to help.
- ii) **Crib Service:** It had been suggested that two services be held this year. Following brief discussion it was confirmed that just one service will be held.
- iii) **Decorating the church for Christmas:** The majority of decorations and flowers will not be done till after the Carol Service as flowers will not last over the entire festive period if done too early. It was noted that there will still be some decorations in the church for the Carol Service including the Christmas tree and the Christmas Experience.

b) Fabric & Churchyard Committee

- i) **Communications mast:** This is still under discussion.
- ii) **Church lighting:** DJS had requested quotes from eight companies. She had received one from Instalec who had drawn up the specification. The only other company which responded was not prepared to quote as per the specification and proposed an alternative design. It was agreed that at least one other quote be obtained for the original specification for which a Faculty has been granted.

Action: Andrew Bond will pursue obtaining getting a further quote

c) Stewardship & Finance Committee

- i) **Safeguarding:** The Team had attended a Deanery meeting of representatives. Regular training for all churches is planned. The Team is responsible for the Safeguarding Policy at St Mary's and is looking to appoint 'champions' for young people and vulnerable adults who will raise awareness of Safeguarding at St Mary's and be points of contact for information.
- ii) **Stewardship:** It is proposed that we cease using the term 'stewardship' and refer to 'Giving at St Mary's: time, talents, treasure' instead. This was agreed.
- iii) **Parish Giving Scheme (PGC):** A representative from the Diocesan Resourcing Office had attended the last meeting to talk about this scheme whereby regular giving is administered by the PGS, including regular Gift Aid claims. This greatly reduces the work of the Stewardship Recorder. Donors are encouraged to give by Direct Debit, increasing their giving annually by the rate of inflation if they wish. It was noted that donors can opt out of such regular increases. It was agreed that St Mary's implement this scheme (9 for, 1 against).

8) Mission Action Plan

Thanks were expressed to the team who had undertaken a review of the Mission Action Plan. They had conducted a survey and it was noted that the majority of respondents were active members of the congregation. Most respondents were content with current practices at St Mary's although there was a high level of interest in developing what St Mary's does for young people and families. The team had circulated a paper to the UCC prior to the meeting which outlined priorities which were agreed by the UCC:

- a) Transforming communities: more actively support our neighbours, particularly the elderly and those with young families.
- b) Making new disciples: offer events and activities to help attract and support newcomers.
- c) Going deeper into God: develop a series of initiatives to assist our church to strengthen and deepen the faith and understanding of our congregation.

Action: The team will formulate a three-year plan and ask the UCC sub-committees to action specific tasks.

9) Garden of Remembrance

It was noted that the present Garden of Remembrance is nearly full. It was therefore agreed that this garden be closed for further interments other than those of spouses of those already interred. The

present garden will continue to be tended. It was agreed to apply for a Faculty to open a new garden. The location of the new garden is to be confirmed; possibilities include to the north of the porch or at the east end of the churchyard. Advice will be sought as to how to mark the area and deter people from walking over it. It was further suggested that only loose ashes be interred in the new garden.

10) School governor

It was proposed and unanimously agreed that Christine Payne be appointed a governor of St Mary's School.

11) Deanery & Circuit news

- a) **Deanery:** A new Rural Dean has been appointed. The new Vicar at St Andrew's, Chorleywood has been inducted. The Bishop of St Albans had visited the Deanery earlier in the month.
- b) **Circuit:** It is planned that two new ministers will be appointed from September 2017. It was noted that Revd Richard Lowson will be taking a sabbatical from April – June 2017.

12) Deanery Synod members

It was noted that St Mary's currently has no representatives on Deanery Synod. Four spaces are available.

13) LEP Constitution

Thanks were expressed to those who had attended the meetings to discuss the Constitution. DJS had sought answers to the questions posed and had now received answers. There will be a further meeting at 10.45am on Saturday 7 January 2017.

14) Any other business

DJS informed the UCC that she is planning a New Year's Day walk round the Aquadrome, followed by refreshments at the Vicarage. It is an event open to all. This is being publicised in LINK.

15) Items to be publicised in LINK

- a) Bequests
- b) Garden of Remembrance
- c) MAP priorities
- d) Chancel works
- e) RL sabbatical

16) Date of next meeting and events

The next meeting of the UCC will be held on Monday 9 January 2017

There will be a meeting to discuss the LEP Constitution at 10.45am on Saturday 7 January

The meeting ended with the Grace