

**Minutes of the meeting of St Mark's Church Council
2 February 2009**

Welcome with opening prayers and reading

Apologies

John and Mary Stubbs, John and Janet Day, Audrey Elliott, Morag Stewart, Laura and Ian Farthing, Janet Ibberson, Wendy Waters, Marion Prior, Wendy Rider

Leadership

- The stationing appointment was not now going ahead. The Circuit Leadership Team had advised that the prospective applicant had decided not to come to the Partnership. There was still the possibility that a candidate could be put forward and this would be pursued.
- Discussions were ongoing regarding the parish boundary, and the inclusion of the Woodlands development into St Mark's. The matter has been referred to the Arch Deacon and further meetings are to be held.
- Numbers at all of the Christmas services were very good.
- A representative from Clubhouse is to attend the next Leadership Team meeting as part of the ongoing plan to involve Church organisations, and hear of any concerns or issues they may have.
- The Christmas Fayre raised over £2,000. Thanks were expressed to all involved.
- A letter is to be sent to all organisations using the Church premises requesting that, for health and safety reasons, the kitchen is not used as thoroughfare when being used for food preparation.

Centre Management

- The volunteer team were delighted with the extended office accommodation: the working environment was so much better.
- Bookings continue to be strong and there had been a number of non regular bookings made.
- Groups using the Large and Small halls are very pleased with the improvements and refurbishments which have been made. The new door to the Large Hall and the reception window in the office will be fitted in the next week.
- The architect is to investigate the leaks which have occurred in the Large Hall, the Wren Room and the reoccurring leak in the Church roof.
- The first stage of the faculty to extend the entrance canopy has been approved. New grant applications would begin shortly.
- Elizabeth Bean has joined the team of volunteers who help in the office. Thanks were recorded to all the volunteers for their continuing support, particularly during the alterations.

Finance

- All currently running well and to budget. The Gift Aid tax claim, covering the Apr – Sep 08 period, totalled £3309.35. A claim had been submitted covering the MAF Christmas Appeal, which totalled £406.38. Thanks were recorded to Ian for his ongoing hard work and diligence in the management of the Church finances.

Pre-School

- A projected funding shortfall of £7,000.00 was possible for the current financial year.
- There had been problems with some difficult children but this was being addressed. However, the overwhelming outlook was very positive and the staff were confident that the current small issues would be resolved quickly.

Clubhouse

- It was hoped that further funding would be provided for the next 12 months. Membership was full and regular meeting were taking place between Charlie, Ian, Linda and Janice.

Storybox

- All going well. It was good that Emma Strangwick was back to run the sessions.

Chat and Play

- Up to 50 attend these sessions which is excellent, but not many of the mothers and children stay on for Storybox.

Junior Church

- Thanks were recorded to Janna and Debbie for their continuing work in support of the Sunday school and crèche.

Pastoral Support

- The level of visits and contact with bereaved people continues at a high level. Members of the Church Council wished to record their thanks and appreciation of the work carried out by the team, and particularly to Mary Stubbs for all her hard work.

Garden of Remembrance

- All was working well. The balance on the Graveyards account was £12 000.
- It was proposed that Peter Aspinall had been asked to design a display area for visitor's flowers. A faculty would need to be applied for. It was proposed by Linda Parry and carried unanimously that we go ahead.

Woodland

- Thirty eight interments have taken place to date
- Two new glades are to be opened, Robin and Wren and two reservations have already been received. Wren is planned to be specifically for children.
- Three benches have been installed.
- Further contacts are to be made with funeral directors to advise them of the Woodland Burial Trust. This year's open day is to be arranged for June.
- Finances are running well and ahead of plan. There are sufficient funds to pay back the Circuit loan. The cost of the roadway and legal costs have been paid. A meeting is to be arranged with the new accountant.
- The Diocese have asked that a covenant be drawn up to cover maintenance responsibilities.

Missions

- The Council discussed the need to have a "joined up" approach for the Partnership in order to ensure the best results. It was felt that UK based charities would be possible for 2009. It was important to help organisations not receiving support from other areas and with a Christian ethos.

Circuit

- A meeting of treasurers is to be held at Oakley to discuss 2009/10 Assessments.
- The Circuit and Priory were both now registered with the Charities Commission.
- The next Circuit meeting is to be held at Park Road on 18 March.

Deanery

- The next meeting is to be held on 5 February. Our representative, Audrey Elliott, will stand down after this meeting.

Dates of the next meetings in 2009: 22 June and 9 November