

Minutes of the meeting of St Mark's Church Council

22 June 2010

The meeting opened with a reading and prayers

Apologies: Mary Stubbs, Mick Ovenden, Margaret Appleton, Delia Shephard

Minutes: The minutes of the last meeting were accepted with a request to update the Church website with current copies of the minutes.

Leadership:

- The Arch Deacon's inspection visit was scheduled for July 12th.
- A Circuit Youth Worker had been employed and would be based at Priory Methodist Church.
- The Leadership Team had received a comment from one member of the congregation regarding noise from children attending a Baptism, which had taken place on the same Sunday as the Communion Service. It was suggested by Wendy Waters that children could be encouraged to join the Sunday school after the Baptism service. Members were advised that the young children will go into the Chapel on Sunday 11 July, and this could be a good alternative for future Baptism Services as well. It was also stated that Baptisms would normally be held as part of the Family Service. However, it was not always possible for this to fit in with the families involved. It was agreed that this would be discussed at a future Leadership Team meeting.
- Various chair samples had been received to replace the Church chairs, including a sample from the original supplier. Prices were in the area of £70 each.
- Members wished to record their thanks to John and Irene Harrison for organising this year's Christian Aid house to house collection.
- Delia had agreed to be the Church Council representative to oversee the work of Clubhouse and be the contact for Clubhouse staff.
- The taxi service for members of the congregation was beginning to be used and would be monitored over the coming months.
- It was planned to distribute the flowers displayed at our Sunday Services to local people who may be ill or bereaved or unable to get out. This has been done very successfully by Putnoe for some time.

Centre Management:

- A new window has been installed in the upstairs office, we have greatly improved ventilation and natural light.
- Bookings are being maintained at a high level.
- The foyer is to be decorated during the summer holidays, and the cooker is to be industrially cleaned.
- The problems with the new floor in the main hall have still not been rectified. Discussions are ongoing between the supplier and our architect.
- Members were advised that the faculty and planning application to fit photovoltaic panels to the roof area near to the main entrance have now been approved. St Mark's will receive £1500 per annum in grants for 25 years, in addition to the immediate energy savings. The cost of the panels will be £15,000. Funds were available to cover this, and it was agreed to go ahead with the project and have the panels fitted during July.
- The problems with the Times & Citizen publishing full sections from Partnership News have now been resolved.
- There had been further incidents of damage to the candles in the Chapel. The matter, including CCTV data, had been referred to the police.

Finance:

- Ian reviewed the Church accounts for 9 months of the Financial Year to May. Income is running at 76% of budget and expenditure 66% (versus 75% target).
- Clubhouse is running well. Funding has been split and we are awaiting the first grant payment.
- Pre-school funds are currently tight and it is possible that a small loss could be made during this financial year. This is very much dependant on numbers attending. Reserves are in place to meet any future needs, if required.
- The Organ Fund is currently £6 793. Members agreed that this years Craft Fayre profits should go towards the new organ fund.
- Tax returns had been filed for all paid staff.
- In regard to our registration with the Charities Commission, Articles of Association for the LEP are being sought in order to complete our application.
- A cheque for £3732.43 had been received covering the second Gift Aid claim of the 2009/10 tax year.

Pre-school:

- Helen has been awarded her degree, which is excellent news. Members wished to record their congratulations to Helen.
- New Pre-school web pages have been added to the main Church website.
- Up to 15 hours of funded places were now available for eligible parents.

Clubhouse:

- Progressing well but funding continues to be an ongoing concern. As noted above, Delia agreed to act as the contact person with Clubhouse.

Storybox:

- The group is thriving and showing excellent results. 20 children currently attend and it is anticipated that an upper limit of 30 children will need to be introduced.
- It was suggested that we could advertise at other churches.
- Thanks were recorded to Janna for all her hard work in running Storybox and in ensuring that the group continues to provide an important service in the wider community.

Chat and Play:

- Going well, although numbers have fallen a little.
- Emma had requested some help in running the group and this was being looked at by members of the leadership team.

Junior Church:

- Numbers attending during Sunday services continue to fluctuate. Thanks were recorded to Janna for the excellent work done with the younger children.
- Plans for the after school activity for young people, Messy Church, is progressing well. Wendy Waters updated members on the work done so far, which has included visits to other churches with long experience in organising Messy Church. Wendy will speak to members of St Mark's at a Sunday service during July and seek volunteers prepared to help. The first Messy Church is being planned for Wed 6th October.

Pastoral Support Team:

- Contact is regularly made with bereaved people. Jane Mason and Wendy Waters were

thanked for their continued involvement.

- Telecare and Friends for Life are both working very well.
- A great deal of informal pastoral care and support is provided by members of both churches, which is greatly appreciated.
- Prayer support is available at Wednesday Communion at St Mark's and on Thursday morning at Putnoe Heights Prayer Group.
- Home Communion is available in consultation with Charlie.
- A new Prayer Group has started at Putnoe on Fridays
- The Commemoration Service will be held on Sunday 14th November at 3.00pm. The speaker will be Deacon Jane Mason.

Garden of Remembrance:

- Visitors continue to express appreciation of the Garden and thanks were given to all the people involved in keeping the area so nice. Additional "one off" help may be needed towards the end of the summer.
- The floral tower is used a great deal and has helped in maintaining the appearance of Garden area. It may be necessary to purchase a trolley to move the floral tributes to the tower area.
- The committee is looking to replace some of the existing trees with hornbeam.
- A five year plan is to be drawn up for the Garden to establish its future development.
- The Book of Remembrance attracts a lot of interest, and the committee are looking the best way to keep it available to view and, at the same time, protect it.
- Council members recorded their thanks to Mary for all the time and hard work spent on ensuring that the Garden is appreciated by so many people.

Woodland:

- This year's open day had been held on May 15th and was very well attended. 22 plots were reserved. The Woodland looks excellent and had been commented on by all those attending.
- All loans have now been repaid.

Missions:

- Autumn / Christmas mission project to be confirmed with Putnoe Heights.

Circuit:

- The major Circuit reorganisation was being finalised. This would involve the amalgamation of a number of officers and include a number of property sales. It was anticipated that the restructuring would be completed in the autumn.
- A Circuit walk had been organised starting at Priory, taking in Willington and would finish at Sandy.
- A Circuit ecumenical meeting was to be set up by Deacon Jane.

Deanery:

- All ministerial places are currently full.
- Richard Hibbert has been appointed as the new Rural Dean with Mike Fudger as assistant Rural Dean.
- Wendy Waters has been appointed Lay Reader Co-ordinator for the Deanery.

Dates of future meetings:

8th November St Mark's Church Council, 10th April 2011 Congregational Meeting

