

Minutes of Church Council, 11th January 2006

Present: Angela Soboslay, Sarah Jones, Matthew Jones, Chris Gladstone, Nicky Gladstone, Mark Elliott, Clive Tilling, Antony Claridge, Martin Palmer, Abi Dudley, Jane Fletcher, Richard Gabe, Mike Rule, Yvonne Morris, Sylvia Ayers, Sarah Hiscock

Apologies: Emma Elliott, David Marles, Bob Siderfin, David Bishop, Margaret Burrows

The meeting was chaired by Mark Elliott

Minutes of the last meeting, held on 29th November, were approved and signed. Proposed Martin Palmer, Seconded Mike Rule

Matters Arising

Greeters

Not yet in place and trained. Will be in place for February.

Provision for Children and Young People

Meeting to be held tomorrow, also working on a few ideas for family services. Results should be visible in the very near future.

Remarks from Officiating Minister

Antony thanked Council for work over Christmas and Advent, and thanked in particular Mark, Mike and David and the choir for the music, which was of a typically high standard.

Antony emphasised the importance of Brunel Manor weekend away – good opportunity to cement relationship within the LMG.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Thursday 19th will see the visit of Cardinal Archbishop Cormac Murphy-O'Connor to Bath Abbey. All encouraged to attend.

Lent Groups. Jonathan and Antony have been considering various programmes for Lent Study, and have chosen one by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Following some discussion as to whether Christ Church would be able to host a Lent Group, the feeling was that it would be best to encourage the congregation to attend the course run by St Stephens, rather than committing to anything more. Further information on the St Stephen's course will be published in the magazine.

LMG Report

This was largely contained within Antony's remarks above, and will in future form part of the same agenda item. Caroline O'Neill is to be licensed on Thursday 26th January at 7pm as Part-time Bath Deanery Adviser for Partnership with Secondary Schools, and assistant priest for the united benefice of Charlcombe St Mary with Bath St Stephens Churches. A Christ Church presence at this service would be most welcome.

Deanery Synod

Next meeting is in March

Churches Together in Bath

The Mayor's Multi Faith Gathering will take place on Sunday 5th February at 3pm in the Banqueting hall (see magazine for further details). Sylvia reported that CTB were trying to encourage more people to take part in the Good Friday Cross Walk – details to follow. Chris Munday has resigned as Joint Christ Church CTB representative, and Margaret Heath has offered to take his place. Proposed: Sylvia Ayers Seconded Yvonne Morris, all in favour.

Accessibility of our services to the unchurched

This item was introduced by Matthew Jones, who circulated a background document (attached). He stressed that the importance lies not in changing what we do in our services, but in thinking carefully about how we present that to other people.

The main points of the discussion were as follows:

How do we present the service, in terms of service books and cards?

Evensong is bewildering, and the BCP is of very little help if you are new to the service.

Also, BCP service for 8 o'clock on a Sunday is difficult to follow from the book, and there are often visitors at that service.

Furthermore, the laminated service card does not contain complete "stage directions" – when to stand, sit and kneel, and some congregational parts of the service (eg The Lord's Prayer) are not printed in full.

Following some discussion of various possibilities, it was agreed that we would produce a booklet containing the whole of the congregational part of the service, including stage directions and most of what is said by the priest (with the notable exception of the complete Eucharistic prayers). On the facing page or in a margin would be some explanatory notes. These descriptions would not be overcomplicated, and would have the added benefit of making the service more accessible to our children. It is not the intention that these notes should attempt to explain the Eucharist, but they would invite anyone who wished to find out more to speak to a priest or direct them to useful further reading. The CofE website is very good.

What do people find out about Christianity when they come to Church?

Important to be welcoming, and friendly, and try to be open. This will teach people as much about Christianity as anything else. Plus, the notes in the booklet will be a great help in explaining what we are doing or trying to do.

What use is made of publicity?

New noticeboards are currently under investigation in order improve our external publicity. Also, contact is to be made with the Bath Chronicle in order to publicise our weekly services. All were encouraged to contact local papers etc in order to publicise individual events.

Consideration is also to be given to how we present our service, for example, could we somehow market Evensong so as to make it attractive to the "Classic FM" market, along the lines of "Smooth Classics at 6.30"

Any Other Business

Missions to Seafarers

2006 is 150th anniversary of the founding of the Mission to Seafarers. This will be marked by a special service in Westminster Abbey, for which Sylvia has more details. This will be publicised via the notices and the magazine.

Material for next meeting

Genesis – how can we help the homeless and disadvantaged people who come to Church for money?

Re-structuring of the back of Church

The meeting closed with prayers

PLEASE NOTE

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 2nd March (this is an alteration).
The meeting will be open to the whole Congregation,
and will be led by Paul Solly of Genesis.
