

Christ Church Council Meeting June 8th 2022 Lower Mews

The meeting was opened with a prayer

Present

Lore Chumbley, Mark Elliott, Jane Nicholson, Zi Ling, Judith Bishop. Malcolm Wall, Brenda Wall, Lucy Humbold, David Rawlings, Pauline Swaby Wallace, Isaac Elliott.

1) Apologies for absence

Jonathan Stead, Richard Gabe, Kara Maylor, Zoe Bushell.

2) Welcome and Elections

The chair welcomed our new members, Ling, Lucy and Isaac.

Jonathan Stead was elected as Lay Chair unanimously.

We failed to elect a secretary from among council members. LC was charged with asking a number of named members of the congregation if they would agree to be co-opted.

3) Minutes The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as correct.

4) Matters arising

a) Choral scholarships

ME suggested we should offer two scholarship of £500 p.a. per child to pay for singing lessons

plus two back row (adult singer) scholarships of £1000 p.a. Mark will approach St Andrew's school to propose offering scholarships in the academic year starting in September 2022. The scholars' commitment would be to sing in each week in term time and up to Christmas and up to Easter i.e. approx 42 weeks per year.

Ideally 4 children aged 9 and upwards would be recruited and 4 adults (each paid £1000 p.a.) but 2 children and 2 adults will be the target initially.

We will advertise in St Andrews' school and local community centres. (ZL)

b) Julian House Day Centre has been using Lower Mews successfully every Monday 9.30am - 2 pm. It was agreed LC suggest to Trustees we offer a second day.

c) Relaxation of Covid restrictions.

We are now offering the communal cup and distancing cords have been removed.

d) Visitors' Welcome cards

VK to be invited to design welcome card which would explain our worship and also provide dates and times of activities. (LC)

e) Disability

The magnifying glasses have been well received - but it was suggested that they should have rechargeable batteries. JB will follow this up

f) Art Exhibition. Z L reported that this coincided with the Bath fringe festival and attracted visitors from the congregation, from Somerset and London. Thanks were recorded to Ling and Eldarin.

5) Living up to our Mission Statement - Building Bridges. Members were asked to give some thought to this before the next meeting and bring ideas then.

6) Worship

a) Windrush celebration

P S explained that it is now 75 years since the arrival of the Windrush. It is unclear whether the third generation want to continue to mark Windrush day.

In addition there is feeling there should be a different, 'Caricom' celebration for all the islands and to mark 60 years of independence for Trinidad and Jamaica. This would probably take place in the Abbey

With all this in mind the 19th June service will be low key but there will be a lunch in Lower Mews and rum punch.

b) The Iona Service is growing in strength and popularity

7) Finance

a) Diocesan Financial Report

BW reported from Deanery Synod the Diocesan message that our inherited model of church, centred on an ordained minister in each Parish church is financially difficult if not impossible to sustain. The Bath and Wells Diocesan five-year plan shows a £4 - £5 million deficit. The numbers attending church have fallen throughout the Diocese and there is a reported 23% annual reduction in income.

As a result, it has been decided twenty-eight full time paid stipendiary posts will need to be cut from the Diocese including five from Bath Deanery in the next few years. The decision has also been made to train fewer curates to cut costs and to rely more on lay ministers. Serious concerns were expressed.

We agreed to respond to the Diocese as follows -

'Parish ministry has to be our highest priority even if we lose everything else. The Parish priest is not just for Christians but has a cure of souls. Without a Parish priest we will lose congregations. Priests also manage the volunteers. Why would lay leaders, if properly trained, be cheaper than priests? We believe the church should reduce the numbers of Bishops and Archdeacons and the staff in the Diocesan office. Do we, for instance, need two bishops in Bath and Wells?'

LC will put together a letter for Council's approval.

We also agreed that as an act of solidarity with the Diocese, Christ Church will increase our Parish share to £16,500 p.a., an increase of 10%

Proposed David Rawlings,

Seconded Brenda Wall

Agreed unanimously.

b) Deanery Contribution

There was discussion of the Deanery plan to align payments to the Deanery to the size of the church. This will not affect Christ Church's payment. We agreed to pay this year's requested payment of £30.00.

Proposed Judith Bishop

Seconded Malcolm Wall

Agreed unanimously

We agreed that we authorise the Treasurer to pay £30.00 p.a. to the Deanery in future years

Proposed Jane Nicholson

Seconded Mark Elliott

Agreed unanimously

b) Cleaner's pay increase.

Our cleaner is currently paid £15.00 per hour for four hours cleaning per week. She has requested an increase to £17.50 per hour. It was agreed that we will offer an increase of 10%, that is a rate of £16.50 per hour. LC will inform Julie and the treasurers of this change.

8) AOB

- a) In view of the multiple celebrations including the Platinum Jubilee celebrations it was agreed to postpone the Julian Road celebration to summer 2023
- b) We agreed to purchase a Home Communion set as a gift to Kara on her priesting. Council will pay £200 (approximately half the cost) toward this. The rest will be raised from the congregation.
- c) PS shared an invitation to Fairfield house on June 25th

The meeting closed with the Grace