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21/11/2023

Minutes of PCC Meeting

Tuesday 19th September at 7.30pm

Present: Howard Wright, David Duffin, Andrew Walters, Janet Foster, Rich Gillard, Claire MacPherson (Treasurer), Frank Maloney, Pam Maloney, Bob Meekums, Doug Titheridge, Jill Williams, Jane Hughes (guest), David Williams (secretary).

1. Welcome and Apologies

Action

Howard Wright welcomed everyone to the fifth meeting of 2023.
Apologies were received from Pip Hughes.

2. Worship & Prayer

Howard W led the meeting in worship – “In Christ Alone” and “I see the King of Glory...Hosanna!”. Several members led in prayer.

3. Declarations of (financial) Interest

None.

4. PCC – meeting of 18th July 2023

- a. Approval of Minutes – approved *nem con*.
- b. Matters Arising from Previous Meetings:
MAF donation – Claire confirmed that this had been sent.

5. Finance.

- a. Financial Statement, January 1st to August 31st 2023.
Claire presented a financial report and commentary for the year to August 31st. She drew attention to the more favourable forecast for the year, continuing to predict a small surplus compared to the original budgeted significant deficit for the year. She encouraged PCC to exercise caution when reading the figures.
One-off donations at the start of the year totalling about £30k balanced a monthly deficit of about £1000 thereafter.
In response to a question about cash donations at services, Claire estimated that the average was about £400pcm, but amounts varied widely from month to month.
It was estimated that the full cost of a replacement full-time Youth and Children’s minister would be about £35k.
Employment allowances from HMRC are at last being received.
- b. Reinstating some or all of tithe (July meeting, min.6.a.3) – proposals needed.
Janet Foster presented a paper outlining the historic monthly donations to twelve missions up to October 2021, and the subsequent discussions about restoring some or all of these. In the light of the Treasurer’s report and the potential cost of recruiting a new Youth and Children’s worker to replace Lorna Littlewood, Janet **proposed** and Howard **seconded** that we continue supporting our linked diocese of Karamoja, Uganda at £100 per month and that we will reconsider all other aspects of the tithe in September 2024. PCC **agreed** *nem con*.
Members noted the successful one-off event raising money for TearFund earlier in the year, and agreed that such events were again to be encouraged.

6. Youth and Children's Worker

a. Update on Lorna

Lorna Littlewood tendered her resignation, which has now been accepted. Her maternity leave formally ends in December. There is also a notional period of annual leave to be appended.

Jane reminded PCC of the encouraging things happening with Messy Church and the Messy Mondays programme that ran in August. In particular she drew attention to the inter-generational involvement with parents and children, with a number of parents stepping into some leadership roles.

b. Recruitment process

Howard presented document *Recruitment 2023 Launch Document for PCC.docx*.

Discussion focused on:

- i. the role of Youth and Children's minister/worker and its requirement that a successful candidate should live locally in order to be accessible to and building relationships with children and teenagers at the times they are available – evenings, Sundays, times of school assemblies, etc. These are the places where children and young people can be contacted, introduced to the Gospel and discipled. Among other limitations, this rules out 'job-sharing'.
It would be an advantage to have someone able to offer musical talent. But further discussion of what are the essential gifts and what might be considered desirable should be left with Personnel Team (Jill, Pam and Timothy (n.b. there is one vacancy following Abi's resignation from PCC)).
- ii. a suitable proposal for salary, depending on experience. A benchmark figure based on current advertisements in 'Christianity' magazine and another on starting salaries in Teaching were reviewed. After wide-ranging discussion, Rich **proposed** that a range of £25-28k should be offered; Bob **seconded**, and the proposal was agreed *nem con*.

In the light of the discussion on finance it was recognised that at current levels of financial support to the church, such recruitment would eat into reserve funds.

7. Update on Discussions with St Andrew's, Medstead

a. Letter sent to Diocese following July meeting, and response.

Rich and Timothy sent a detailed letter following the discussion at July PCC about the two-year delay on what was announced as a six-month process, and the planning paralysis and stress on Howard this was causing. Within a few days the necessary processes were in motion to run the public consultation. The letter, together with any forthcoming pro- and anti- representations will be considered by the Mission and Pastoral Committee (MPC) of the Church Commissioners.

b. Public consultation.

It is reported that there have been three contra-representations, in addition to a number supporting this merger of parishes. It is clear from personal contacts that the majority of the regular congregation at Medstead fully appreciate all that Howard is doing for them on top of his role at COGS. It is believed that the contra-representations mainly come from members of the public who not fully engaged with ongoing worship and work at St Andrew's. One other has already been rejected as beyond the remit of Church Commissioners' consideration.

The MPC has at least three scheduled meetings before the end of 2023. In a previous year it dealt with 14 proposed reorganisations. This year there are 22 from the Winchester Diocese alone. It seems likely that any merger will not take place until sometime in 2024.

c. Matt's workload.

His current workload for COGS already makes a full use of his time. It is clear that joining with Medstead would require further administrative support, whether voluntary or paid. In the first place we would actively seek a volunteer, including

Medstead in the invitation as that might bring in someone who could help the two congregations to communicate well and work together effectively.

8. Teams

- a. Personnel:
 - i. Staff – see item 6.
 - ii. Membership – following Abi's resignation from PCC there remains one vacancy on the Personnel Team.
- b. Building.
 - i. Quinquennial review – it is now 13 months since the review. DAC will now be pushing for the report to be submitted. Much of the work informally notified to COGS has been carried out.
 - ii. Progress on solar panels – COGS has not received any bills for electricity in two years. Claire has already set aside accruals within the church finances to cover anticipated expenditure, but unless and until we receive actual bills the contractor cannot issue a firm quote for the cost of purchase and installation.
- c. Ministry Leaders.
 - i. Worship, Small Groups, Prayer, Mission:
Nothing to report.

9. Safeguarding

Matt has notified PCC members whose DBS certification is up for renewal.

10. Health and Safety.

Bi-monthly report: Frank had provided document:

22.09.05 Health & Safety Rpt.docx.

Two children had suffered minor injury during 'Messy' activities while in company of their parents. No further action needed, but parents may need reminding of the need to accept responsibility for their children during such events.

11. Any Other Business.

None notified.

12. Date of next meeting:

PCC, Tuesday 21st November 2023

Unless the Parish merger is approved, in which case:

Special Meeting of the new Parish of Medstead and Four Marks,
Tuesday 17th October 2023

Jill concluded the meeting with prayer at 9.26pm.
