

ST MARY'S RIVERHEAD with DUNTON GREEN

MINUTES

**Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
Tuesday 14 February 2011
In the Church Hall**

PRESENT:

The Reverend Canon Paul Francis – in the Chair

Diane Williams, Barry Sharp, Elaine Hanham, Ronnie Todd,
Audrey Bernardi, Martyn Berry, Jeanette Francis, Doris Gosnold, Yemisi Howitt, Tim Johnston,
Lee Kings, Sarah Stott, Ursula Warner, Jean Woods, Lynn Wilson, Andrew & Joanna Tawse and
Robin Tonge

1. Opening Prayers

The meeting began with worship.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Anne Bourne, Miranda Cormack, Anne Straight.

3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting 11 January 2011

The Minutes were amended regarding Amherst School's use of the church during the Christmas period.

The Minutes were then signed by the Vicar as a true copy.

4. Matters Arising

- i) 4.i The Jonathan Witchell Memorial Bench – Robin Tonge told the meeting that the bench arrives next Thursday. It was agreed that it could be stored temporarily in the Undercroft. Robin also reported that some of the long overhanging stems of the yew tree will need to be taken off, to avoid birds perching above from soiling the bench below. The waste bin will be moved to place it further away from and out of sight of the bench. Mr Colnett of Riverhead Parish Council will be installing the bench.
- ii) 4.ii Church Repairs – Diane Williams reported that the cherry picker arrived on the allotted day and the work has been completed. It was suggested we could have some cosmetic work done when we have some spare money. Diane then reported that more lead had been stolen from the south porch, although they left some behind. A quotation for replacement of the lead with Lacommet has been sought. The Diocese is happy for us to use the Lacommet replacement instead of lead. We will need to apply for a faculty retrospectively.
- iii) 4.iii Organist – The Vicar reported that he had received no reply to his letter to the one possible replacement organist. He will put an advertisement in The Link. We do have a stand-in to cover when Janet is away. The Vicar was very grateful to Janet Sharp for her continued commitment.
- iv) 6. Events Team – Sarah Stott told the meeting that we now have some volunteers and a handover meeting is being held with the new team.

- v) 8. Directions Consultation – The Vicar reported that he had met with Ross Garner who has agreed to address a short meeting on 11 June. He was very encouraged by the day he spent with us in November last year.
- vi) 10. Fund Raising – Church Urban Fund – A representative is coming to speak to us regarding this subject on 5 July.
- vii) 11. Amherst School – The Vicar told the meeting that the school had been thanked for providing the Christmas Tree.

Tim Johnston then reiterated his point from the last meeting that our decision regarding the school's use of the church piano reflected badly on the church. Tim hoped we could work with the school in future. The possibility of inviting them for Christmas carol singing in the church was discussed or if this wasn't possible then perhaps they could come for a Harvest Festival event. The Vicar mentioned that we also have the forthcoming King James Bible event. He will write to the Headmaster with the above suggestions and mention that the church facilities would be available to them providing they have someone competent to use them.

Tim also wanted clarification of the decision relating to the choir fund. Elaine confirmed that she will use up the balance on the account and include any future payments/receipts in the General Fund. This will, of course, be subject to discussing the matter with Janet Sharp.

5. APCM Preparations

The Secretary reported that we have had approximately 50 replies so far from people who will be attending. There are two outstanding reports which are needed before the bundle of papers can be photocopied.

The vacancies for PCC members and Deanery Synod were then discussed. For some reason we have nine PCC vacancies this time round. Four nominations have been received to date. Anne Straight and Doris Gosnold are happy to continue as Deanery Synod representatives. We therefore need one new DS representative. The Vicar reported that he had written to several church members asking if they would be interested in being a PCC member. It could be that we are short of the nine by the date of the APCM. However, 1/3rd of electable members are needed on the PCC of a total of 15, therefore five would be acceptable, but it would not be ideal.

The Treasurer then gave a brief report on the finances. A handout was given to each PCC member. A small surplus of £344 had been made during the year which means that we have broken even. Some money had been saved in training costs plus we have received income from the hall rental and we will have tax refunds. The accounts are currently with Ian Wells, the church accounts examiner.

The Treasurer pointed out that this year we will not have the Curate's stipend to pay out. Also, the interest from the trust fund goes into the current account, plus the income from the 3G's programme together with the tax refund, which has been good this year.

6. Diocesan Stipend Payments Review

The Vicar had sent round a paper on the above subject prior to the meeting.

There were three questions set out in the paper to be considered regarding the way we pay the Parish Share, as requested by Bishop Brian.

The discussion began with the question of whether we are an independent or interdependent Diocese.

The Vicar pointed out that we have always been independent units, as per directions from the Rochester Diocese. The Vicar went on to say that other parishes pay a larger Parish Share. Ours is smaller as we pay the Vicar's Stipend. Where some parishes are unable to pay they are helped by those who do pay. This brought up the following comments:

- Is this fair?
- Should we pay a percentage of our income?
- Should the PCC decide what they pay?
- The cost of clergy, stipend, NI, pension, council tax, etc, in other parishes is included in the cost of their Parish Priest along with other expenses. The cost is allocated per priest, rather than per Parish. Should we put additional costs in our Parish Share or is it better to keep them separate?
- In other Parishes, Curates are paid from the Diocesan Fund. We paid Jane a small allowance but we were fortunate in that we didn't have to provide a house for her. Should the economic situation of the parish be factored in?
- There are a variety of payment methods. Some give discount for full payment up front. Is this fair to those parishes that cannot pay in full up front?
- Should we change the way we pay the Parish Share or carry on as present?
- If we changed, the Diocese could then decide on whether we have a priest or not. Is this right?

Further discussion ensued.

The question of why we don't encourage more lay preachers was asked.

The Vicar pointed out that there are more non-stipendiary priests and lay readers than ordained priests.

At the end of the discussion it was felt that most of those present would be cautious of change.

The Vicar will put together a reply for the PCC to review.

7. Lent/Holy Week/Easter Services

The Vicar had given out a notice of the above services at Sunday morning's service. A Lent Course will take place at Betty Gilbert's house.

8. Any Other Business

Dunton Green Development – The Vicar reported that the Developers of the old Cold Store site are required by law to provide funding to the community which has to be used for communal benefit. There is apparently £1.2m available. We are invited to apply. Possible good causes were put forward: paid editor for the community magazine; youth worker leader; lighting for the car park; repair to the front steps. The Churchwardens and the Vicar will put together a letter to send to Leslie Bowles at Sevenoaks District Council.

Jane's Induction - The Vicar reminded the PCC of Jane's induction which will be at 6.30 pm on 1st May. It was agreed that a coach be hired for people from church wanting to go, providing there are enough of us to cover the cost.

Garden of Remembrance – Robin Tonge reported that after the autumn clearance of brambles and grubbing out the hedge we are in need of some hawthorn whips. We need about 100 at a cost of approximately £65. The PCC approved the expenditure. Many thanks were given to John and Margaret Curtis for all their hard work in the garden.

About two years ago a resident, whose house backs onto the garden of remembrance, was allegedly throwing dog excrement over his fence into the garden. He was spoken to and it did stop. However, it has apparently started again. It was agreed that the Vicar and Churchwardens will draft an appropriate letter to send to the resident.

The Vicar ended the meeting by thanking those members of the PCC who have completed their three years and reminded everyone that the next meeting will be the APCM on the 6th March.

The meeting ended with prayers.

The date of the 1st meeting of the new PCC will be **Tuesday 3 May 2011** in the church hall.

The meeting ended with prayer.