

## **ST MARY'S CHURCH – ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on Sunday, 10 April 2010 at 12 noon in Garden Hall**

1. The meeting opened with a prayer led by the Rector.

#### **2. Attendance**

Rev'd Mary Bide, Rev'd Martin Booth, the Churchwardens (Donald Broad and Alice Fookes) and some 30 members of the congregation were present. Apologies for absence were received from Edward, Elizabeth and Alex Broad, Alex Brougham, Roger and Rosemary Chadder, Amanda Bell, Jenny Michalacopoulos, John and Alison Neilson, Wendy Zeigler, Liz Johnson.

#### **3. Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting held on 25 April 2010**

The Minutes were signed as a correct record of the meeting.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **5. Church Wardens' Report on the Fabric of the Buildings**

Robert Macdonald Watson was thanked for seeing the works detailed in the 2006 Quinquennial Report (repairs to the roof of the nave, vestries and Warrior Chapel, and to the boundary wall at the east end) through to completion despite no longer being a Church Warden.

With the support of boys from King's College School and members of the congregation, work on churchyard maintenance has continued. Plans for changes to the West Porch, financed by legacies for the purpose, are progressing well. The impending electrical inspection is likely to result in the need for re-wiring in which case the opportunity will be taken to up-grade the lighting in the nave.

Repairs, to be covered by insurance, are taking place to the windows in the Church damaged in an attempted break-in and to the pillar at the entrance to the churchyard demolished by a removal van which had no reason to enter the churchyard.

Tony Winship was thanked for the diligence with which he undertakes the work associated with the safe keeping of all properties in the parish.

#### **6. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer expressed his gratitude to Liz Collins for her work as Treasurer up to June 2010, and for ensuring a smooth handover.

The Treasurer's Report and Audited Accounts to 31 December 2010, as approved by the Committee and subsequently publicly displayed in the Church Porch, were tabled.

- In 2010 there was a surplus on Unrestricted Activities of £13,437, compared with a budgeted deficit of £17,474, and a surplus of £26,004 in 2009.

- Unrestricted income was 3% lower than in 2009; Planned Giving was 5% lower and Hall lettings 4% lower, with overall revenue trends down. Costs were similar to overall levels in 2009, and slightly better than budget.
  - The budget for Unrestricted Activities for 2011 shows a deficit of £28,700, greater than the budgeted amount for 2010. This reflects pressure on income, and cost increases, including the Diocesan allocation and utilities.
  - The substantial deficit (£110,187) on Restricted Activities for 2010 represents principally expenditure on roof repairs in the year, which was funded by the appeal in 2009.
  - Budgeted expenditure on Restricted Activities for 2011, funded in part by legacies received, exceeds expected income by £20,000.
  - After making a prior year adjustment for depreciation of Garden Hall, total funds at the end of 2010 are £1,049,419, of which £861,062 are Restricted and £188,357 Unrestricted.
  - VAT recoveries totalling £54,000 have been made in 2010 and to date in 2011 under the Listed Places of Worship scheme, relating to the roof repairs in 2010 and organ repairs in 2007. Rule changes mean that future recoveries are likely to be more difficult to realise.
  - No provision has been made for possible re-wiring of the church and replacement of nave/aisle carpeting.
  - The Treasurer noted the Covenant Secretary's Report, which refers to the possible need for an appeal to address the budgeted shortfall on Unrestricted Activities. Careful monitoring of actual performance during 2011 will assist the assessment of the need for a new appeal.

In response to a question, cash surpluses above day-to-day requirements are invested in a deposit account operated by the Central Board of Finance which is centrally managed by the Church Board.

## **7. Covenant Secretary's Report/'Planned Giving'**

Over 200 people give regularly, most of which is tax effective. Encouragingly, a number of new members have started giving and a few have been lost because they have moved away and some generous givers have died. The projected deficit of £28,000 unrestricted activities will have to be addressed

## **8. Committee Secretary's Report**

The Church Committee met five times during the year. The main matters discussed were:

- Property issues particularly those relating to drainage and landscaping of the Garden Hall lawn, and refurbishment of the West porch and the need for more storage space both in the church and vestry
- Gardening work in the churchyard including the provision of a protected area in the field aimed at resolving parking problems in the churchyard.
- Social functions for the congregation and outreach activities.
- The finances of the Church and appointment of a new treasurer.
- The Church's own charitable giving.
- Work with youth groups which continues to focus on religious education and social and outreach functions.
- Health and safety issues including lack of lighting along the path to Garden Hall and the responsibility of the church for clearing ice and snow within its property.

## **9. Church Electoral Roll**

At 1<sup>st</sup> April the Electoral Roll stood at 692 (v.641). Some 2,500 people attended over Christmas, most coming to the Crib services.

## 10. Report on the two Church Halls

Fortunately, no major work was necessary on either hall during 2010 though this may not be the case in 2011. The lease to the Nursery School runs to 2016 with a break in 2013 for which notice must be given in the next 12 months. Robert MacDonald Watson was thanked for seeing the lease negotiations to a successful conclusion. Garden Hall, which continues to be heavily let, provided income of £75,909 (slightly less than in 2009). Jenny and Camilla were thanked for their unfailing efforts in managing the lettings.

## 11. Youth Worker's Report

Rafters (aged 13+; 10 regular attendees): Activities continue to be centred on exploring our faith and prayer, 'partying' and in developing friendships within the group and with people from St Mark's.

Friday People (8 – 12 years:) A lively and growing group with crafts and games and learning about our faith. Sylvia Davies, the only 'helper' up to Christmas, was thanked for her hard work, enthusiasm and good ideas. Parents were now volunteering to help, which though a bit disjointed, is working.

A pattern of children's activities has been established. With Rev'd Martin Booth, children are prepared to receive communion and there is a Confirmation Course.

In addition, Catherine Parkes is line manager to the student Youth Worker at St Mark's and is involved with Toddler Praise and Sunday School. In future she will be working more with families/parents.

In response to a question, the choristers are part of the choir, rather than the youth groups.

## 12. Elections and Nominations for Election

- a) **Wardens:** Both Mrs Alice Fookes and Mr Donald Broad were standing for re-election and were unanimously re-elected.
- b) **Committee:** The members not eligible to stand for re-election, having served a three year term, Mr John Bush, Mr David Drummond, Mrs Iris Ronayne, Mrs MaryAnn Turnbull and Dr. David Williams, were thanked for their services over the past three years. Nominations had been received for the election of Alan Jenkins, Elizabeth Whitson, Jo Pitt and Sean Whitman ; all were unanimously elected en bloc
- c) **PCC:** Alice Fookes and Donald Broad were nominated for PCC. It was noted that Wendy Ziegler and John Bright were co-opted members in their capacities as Chair of the Finance Committee and Parish Treasurer.
- d) **Deanery Synod:** Both Mr Giles Ellerton and Mr David Williams were not standing for re-election as the Church's representatives. Mr Alasdair McGregor and Mr Neil Harvey were unanimously elected in their place. This meant that both would be entitled to attend Church Committee and PCC. Serious and sometimes controversial issues (e.g. women bishops, rift with the Episcopal Church in the US) were dealt with at Synod.

## 13. Rector's Address

The text of the Rector's address, in which she talked about the life of the church and the many people within it who do much to maintain its ministry, is appended to these minutes; it will also be posted on the website.

#### **14. Any other business**

Miss Jean Robertson was presented with a bouquet as a mark of appreciation for services as Committee Secretary over many years; this duty would now be undertaken by Mrs Marion Rea.

Mrs Juliet Boyd, Mrs Alice Fookes, Mrs Jane Sanderson and Mrs MaryAnn Turnbull have formed a 'Green Committee' to encourage everyone to think more proactively about our environment. The Car Free Sundays held once a month have proved a great success.

Mrs Alice Fookes proposed a vote of thanks to the Rector for her work on behalf of the Church and its Congregation.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with all saying the Grace. The meeting was followed by a bring and share lunch.

## Rector's Address

The blossom and bulbs are out, the birds are using the nesting boxes in the churchyard, and the church looks very beautiful - thank you Amanda and team. What is even more exiting is that an incredible number of new people have volunteered to be sidesmen, or read lessons at the 11:15, or generally be committed to the church. It was very interesting when doing the Fairer Shares review to see how many people have joined the church in the past few years. Of course, others have moved away, or sadly died (this is a very mobile community), but the church is as lively as ever, and there has been a real increase in young families, particularly at the 11:15.

In response to that we started Toddler Praise last year. This weekday service, while still quite small, has helped people with young children to get to know each other and their children are learning the stories from the bible and the value of prayer. It is also great fun, even if sometimes it is quite challenging to tell for example the story of Elijah and the widow's son with Fuzzy felts. Thank you to our pianists Mary Ann, Iris and David.

There have been many high points in the year. The Christmas Carol service was particularly special this year, so thank you to Chris Thomas and the choir. We have also had some wonderful social events, of which the quiz and the Victorian evening are most memorable. A huge thank you to all who have contributed to these, but especially to John Bush, who has been the driving force behind so many of these events. As always the Harvest lunch was greatly enjoyed by all, this year in its new splendid surroundings, thank you to Caroline and Jane who organised this, and to Lucy and Susan who are taking over from them this year. Another high point is the fact that daily morning prayer has grown. This daily prayer is the foundation of church life, where events and people can be committed to God in prayer.

Challenging points in the year were the loss of two Team Vicars in the Parish (which might be regarded as carelessness) and at the same time losing Hilary Johnson. Hilary has done so much for the parish, working with me and two of my predecessors. With unfailing good humour and sensitivity and remarkable energy she contributed so much to the life and ministry of the church. We miss her. However, an exciting bi-product of the loss of team vicars has been that I have become much more involved in Bishop Gilpin School. It is indeed true that every crisis is an opportunity.

A low point was the ball, but we learnt from that experience. It was disappointing though that many local charities seem to be able to sell tickets at that price, whereas we did not achieve that. Another year, perhaps.

We await the results from the Diocesan Survey and hope that will provide pointers as to how we can work more effectively in mission. I hope that we can inspire more people to train as Pastoral Auxillaries or to be involved in other ministry, lay or ordained. We are lucky to have Tracy and Johanna in training, but a church of this size should be fostering more vocations. Funding the church will be a challenge as the recession bites and the Diocese makes cuts. This is an issue that I hope can be addressed in a creative and positive way.

Since the last annual meeting, we have had many occasional offices – over 30 funerals, 25 weddings and around 100 baptisms. Three children were admitted to communion and six people confirmed. My thanks are due to Martin whose help has been invaluable. He has undertaken everything that has come his way with total professionalism and a winning smile. I would also like to thank everyone who does so much in church, sidesmen, welcomers gardeners, flower arrangers cleaners, silver and brass polishers, linen washers, Jenny and Camilla who deal with hall lettings, Andrianna for doing Grapevine, musicians, those who read the lessons and lead intercessions, servers, communion assistants, , Andrew Lenon, Catherine Parkes and the Children's wardens and all who help with our ministry to young people, Peter and his team of helpers who manage the parking in Tennis Fortnight,

and of course, Fiona and Tony. None of this is possible without the committee, and an especial thank you to those whose term is up, Mary Ann Turnbull, John Bush, Iris Ronayne, David Williams and David Drummond and a huge thank you to Donald and Alice, church wardens, whose wisdom and humour and hard work have enabled so much to happen.

Mary Bide