

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

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on Sunday, 26 April 2009 at 7.45 pm in Garden Hall**

1. The meeting opened with a reading from St John's Gospel and a prayer led by the Rector.

#### **2. Attendance**

Rev'd Canon Hilary Johnson, Rev'd Bruce Rickards, the Churchwardens (Robert MacDonald Watson and Rosemary Chadder) and some 42 members of the congregation were present. Apologies for absence were received from Donald, Jonathan and Ed Broad, Jennie Gubbins, Jenny Michalacopoulos, David McCann, Colin McKerrow and Stephen Turnbull.

#### **3. Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting held on 20 April 2008**

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**

- The congregation was thanked for their contributions to the Development Fund over the past five years and the other fund raising efforts to finance refurbishment of the organ. Following the final inspection by the Diocesan Advisory Committee, the Faculty Certificate of Completion will be signed off. Shepherds, who had done an excellent job, will continue to maintain the organ. Liz Hamilton was thanked for overseeing this project throughout the years it has taken to complete.
- Architects have been appointed to prepare a specification for the extensive repairs to the roof and the miscellaneous masonry works detailed in the 2006 Quinquennial Report; following approval by the Diocesan Advisory Committee, it will be put out to competitive tender, then approved by the PCC before applying for a Faculty.
- The new clergy vestments were donated; the Faculty was extended to include the Altar Frontals.
- The West gallery rail is to be lowered to accommodate more successfully the needs of the choir.
- As a result of a generous donation, the processional cross has been re-silvered.
- A Faculty for the disposal of unused furniture in the gallery is being sought, this will provide more space for use by the choir.
- Thanks to volunteers overseen by Jenny Baker and Jonathan Sweet and boys from King's school, the appearance of the churchyard continues to improve. Path restoration, a planting programme and erection of bird nesting boxes are being undertaken.
- Upgrading of Fellowship House kitchen and repairs to Garden Hall floor being complete, only routine maintenance should be necessary. The lease of Fellowship House to the Nursery is to be extended for a further six years when it expires next year with a break clause after three years.
- A commercial dishwasher was soon to be installed in Garden Hall.

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

The Treasurer's Report and Audited Accounts to 31 December 2008, as approved by the Committee and subsequently publicly displayed in the Church Porch, were tabled.

- Costs had been contained and income was more than budgeted resulting in a year-end surplus of £28,000 which exceeded budget.
- Following the appeal in the Autumn of 2007, the congregation gave £82,000 more with the resultant increase in gift aid tax reclaim.
- 2008 income from lettings was almost identical with that of 2007.
- Income from Tennis Fortnight will continue to be adversely affected by the change in queuing arrangements and will vary depending on the popularity of who was playing in the Davis Cup.
- A grant of £28,000 had been received for Youth Work; a legacy of £6,000 had been received.
- Income from investments was stable (expected to be lower in 2009) and exceeded that of 2007.
- Expenditure on the organ refurbishment was complete and was funded by contributions made specifically for the purpose to the Development Fund.
- There was a need to maintain the Development Fund (possibly to be renamed 'The Umbrella Fund') as capital expenditure would be on-going.
- £16,000 had been raised by the disposal of several small Endowment Funds and will be used for Churchyard maintenance in accordance with the terms of the endowments.
- Music costs had increased by £6,000 as a result of investment in the choir; the new choir robes had been donated.
- Charitable giving had increased by just over £3,500 reflecting increased collections.
- Expenses associated with the Church Halls was lower, largely as a result of new arrangements for utility supplies
- Summarising, the Church is currently well funded but significant amounts will be needed for future development in what is a difficult economic climate.

The Treasurer thanked all those and particularly the Churchwardens, who had been so helpful to her.

A query was raised from the floor as to whether savings could be made by not providing copies of the readings at Sunday services. In response, it was explained that there were insufficient Hymn books and for those not used to Church services the present practice provided an easy way to follow the services; however the matter would be investigated.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that savings on flood lighting were being achieved by reducing the time by one hour and the level of lighting.

## **7. Covenant Secretary's Report**

Following the appeal for planned giving in 2007, income rose from £148,000 to £180,000 in 2008 and tax recovery from £34,000 to £43,000.

## **8. Umbrella Appeal**

Funds were required to finance repairs to the roof, landscaping of Garden Hall lawn and the items still outstanding from the last Quinquennial report. It was therefore proposed to launch a new and all encompassing appeal designed to cover any future works 'branded' The Umbrella Appeal. In response to a query concerning the necessity to launch a new appeal with the attendant expense when the rationale behind the Development Appeal Fund had been that 'crisis management' was no longer feasible and that an on-going fund which raised sums in excess of that needed to meet immediate needs was the way forward, it was explained that this Appeal would take over from the Development Appeal which had been associated with the organ. The letters to be written to those contributing to the Development Appeal would reflect the terms under which their contributions were being made.

## 9. Committee Secretary's Report

The Church Committee met five times during the year. The main matters dealt with related to :

- Work with youth and the establishment of a varied and innovative pattern of social and outreach functions aimed at strengthening the ministry of the Church.
- Finances of the Church including the necessity to take a 3 year view on prioritisation of expenditure funded from the Development Fund and Regular Giving in order to establish a long-term financial plan.
- Relocation of Organ Console and Gallery Plans and repairs to various parts of the roof.
- Landscaping and drainage of Garden Hall Lawn, necessary to avert the possibility of flood damage to the floor of Garden Hall in the event of torrential rain.
- Fund raising, including activities during Tennis Fortnight, and the Church's own charitable giving
- Negotiations with the Nursery regarding the extension of their lease
- Health and safety issues

## 10. Church Electoral Roll

At 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 the Electoral Roll stood at 619 (v.549); 3 people had been removed and 73 added.

## 11. Report on the two Church Halls

- Following the installation of a new kitchen in Fellowship House, little further maintenance was needed on either Halls.
- The rent paid by the Nursery had been raised to £30,360 and the tenancy was to be extended for a further six years with a break clause after three years
- A commercial dishwasher had been installed in Garden Hall,
- Ways of improving drainage and landscaping of Garden Hall lawn were being investigated.

## 12. Elections and Nominations for Election

- Wardens:** Mrs Rosemary Chadder was not seeking re-election having served her 3-year term; Mr Robert MacDonald Watson was standing for re-election and was unanimously re-elected. Mrs Alice Fookes had been nominated for election as Churchwarden; there were no other nominations and Mrs Alice Fookes was duly unanimously elected as Churchwarden.
- Committee:** The members not eligible to stand for a further period were Mrs Anne Archer, Giles Ellerton, Ian Hay and William Featherby. Nominations had been received for the election of Amanda Bell, Elizabeth Broad, David McCann and Marion Rea; all were unanimously elected.
- PCC:** Andy Evans was unanimously elected to be a representative for St Mary's.
- Deanery Synod:** Giles Ellerton, David Williams and William Featherby would continue to be the Church's representatives

## 13. Rector's Address

The text of the Rector's address, in which she talked about the wonderful challenge facing us to enable people to live and hope and love through God and her gratitude to the host of people who work tirelessly for the benefit of the church is appended and will be available to the Congregation at the Cross Aisles; it and these minutes will also be posted on the website.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with all saying the Lord's prayer.