



St. Mark's Church Parochial Church Council

Minutes of PCC Meeting 26 September 2019



The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mark, Bedford Charity Number 1164416.
All minutes are available on our website www.stmarkschurch.com

The meeting began with Compline

Apologies

Elizabeth Bean, Graham Brown, John Day, Mick Ovenden, Marion Prior, Morag Stewart,

Minutes of the previous meeting Minutes of 22 May were agreed

Church Leadership Report Mike Cooper gave details of the 2 September Leadership Team meeting.

- Sam and Charlie expressed their gratitude to Rev Alan Kirk for his support over the summer period.
- On 13 August we had our annual Archdeacons' Visitation. All went well.
- Mission / Harvest weekend, 14 and 15 September. Very positive feedback. 100 plus attended both the BBQ on Saturday and the lunch on the Sunday. We were pleased to welcome Phil and Di Stone from the Scargill Community, who addressed us after our BBQ and, during the Harvest Festival service (attended by 115) and after our lunch. Thanks to all who contributed and especially to Ian Farthing.
Wendy Waters has had subsequent discussions with Phil and Di regarding a possible visit to Scargill by members of St Mark's. More information will follow as tis progresses. An article will be prepared for Parish News
- Scottish Evening – 5 October. Arranged by Morag, there will be pizza, a quiz and some dancing.
- Christmas arrangements. Some early discussion.
There has been a recent suggestion that, as a church, we present an Advent Calendar in reverse for Foodbank. Following discussion, PCC members felt that this was an excellent idea. Lynne Seymour will coordinate this.
PCC members wished to continue with a Christingle service, and arrangements will be put in place.
There will be Gift Service and the Guides will be involved. Emmaus and Prebend Street Day Centre to be the charities supported.
- A two evening Advent Course is to be arranged.
- The Commemoration Service will take place at 3.00pm on 3rd November.
- Neil Kinselley has kindly accepted the invitation to lay the wreath on Remembrance Sunday.

Centre Management

Wendy advised members that there were now 64 groups using the premises. Letting charges were reviewed during September to reflect increases in costs (40p per hour for charitable groups, 50p for business related groups). Groups have been advised and new charges will be introduced in January 2020.

50 new folding chairs have been ordered and will be delivered in time for the Christmas services. Consumable stocks are being increased ahead of 31 October. Arrangements are in hand to tidy the loft storage area. Wendy recorded her thanks to all the volunteers and special good wishes were sent to Milly.

Finance

Ian presented details of the Church finances for the year ending 31 August. Each account is compliant with our reserves policy. Year end balances were as follows; Main Account +£12

142.09, Preschool Account +£4 355.86, Churchyard Account +£11 197.08. Because Pre School numbers had increased, premises rental had been reintroduced. This had boosted hire income, along with increased lettings.

Ian then ran through the key budget areas of income and expense. Future expense includes boiler repairs, the purchase of additional folding chairs, increased utility costs. Upgrade of the play area remains a long term objective. Salary increases for Pre Scholl staff have been introduced, effective 1 September.

Donations towards the GOR fund totalled £3 210, including a specific donation for the granite seat. The next Gift Aid claim was currently being completed. Ian was thanked by members for looking after the finances so efficiently.

Preschool

All was running well and numbers have improved. The new Ofsted format had been introduced. Eligible staff had been reassessed in line with the Workplace Pension requirements and statutory increases will be implemented from October 2019.

Storybox

Numbers were around 12 to 18 per week. Jean Kirk and Sue Fannon had kindly agreed to join the catering rota. Thanks were again recorded to Jaana and Valerie for organising the group.

Chat and Play

Numbers attending continue at a high level with everyone participating in the sessions organized so well by Janine and her Mum.

Junior Church

Members welcomed Aleta as the young people's representative at St Mark's. The children, of all ages, continue to enjoy the activities and studies arranged by Linda Turner. Lined paper, rubbers and word searches will be ordered following a request by the children. Thanks were again recorded to Linda for all the time spent in preparing and running the Junior Church and to Aleta for her support.

Messy Church

All is running well. Numbers have averaged 49 children, parents and carers per session over the past 9 years. New organisers would be needed as Wendy will be standing down in October 2020.

It was planned to run a science based section at the next Messy Church. Specific help would be needed, and it was planned to include an item in Parish News asking for volunteers.

Pastoral Support

Wendy reported that there had been 73 referrals to the team since November. A new morning coffee and chat group had been introduced, held on the first Wednesday of the month in the Chapel.

Wendy and Jean Bank would be attending a mental health awareness course on 19 October, run by MIND.

Members discussed safeguarding in connection with visits by Pastoral Support team members to bereaved people and that risk assessments should form part of the process. All team members have DBS certification.

It was not planned to run a further afternoon tea, following the one held in May.

The Commemoration Service will take place on 3 November, Richard Ledger would be the speaker.

Garden of Remembrance

All running well. The water feature has been installed in the new area and the memorial bench fitted in place today. The new area has been named Willow. Plaques are due to be delivered on 17 October.

Jean and Malcolm were thanked for their work in ensuring the Garden is kept looking so well.

Safeguarding

Members agreed that all St Albans Diocese policies should be adopted and would be available through the St Mark's website and in hard copy from the Church Office. Policies covered include; Domestic Abuse, Serious Incident Reporting and Safe Use of Images (*full details available at www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding-documents*).

Discussion followed on Safe Use of Images in cases of Baptisms and at Messy Church. It was important that parents complete a consent form. Processes were already in place at Messy Church, but Wendy Waters would ensure consent forms were completed. It was also agreed that the Leadership Team member on duty at Baptism Services should ensure that our policy is followed and no photographs are taken without approval and not beyond the family members involved. Pre School already have a very strict policy in place, including no mobile phones within the Pre School areas.

Contact details for anyone needing to report any form of safeguarding issue is displayed on the noticeboard.

Mission Matters

As reported earlier, the Mission weekend with Phil and Di Stone had gone very well. We would look to do something different for next year but use the same format. Sam would develop a fund raising proposal ahead of the Gift Service, with SMART Prebend Street as the beneficiary.

Deanery Matters

A meeting will be held on 30 September to advise how the Parish Share and overall budget are developed. The next Deanery meeting will be held on 5 December at St Mary's Goldington, and include discussion on how the Deanery can best respond to the large amount of housing development taking place.

Dates of next meetings

Church Council Meeting:

- 28 November 2019
- 27 February 2020
- 14 May 2020
- 15 October 2020

Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting: 19 April 2020

With no further business the meeting closed with The Grace.