



St. Mark's Church Parochial Church Council

Minutes of PCC Meeting 22 May 2018



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 Evening Prayer

Apologies

Wendy Rider, John Day, Janet Day, Mike Cooper, Morag Stewart, Margaret Appleton,

Minutes of the previous meeting of 21 February 2018

These were agreed. Safeguarding will be an agenda item at all PCC meetings.

Church Leadership Report

- Edward gave details of the 8 May Leadership Team meeting.
- Ian had given a detailed review of the Church finances and this would be covered later in the meeting.
- Summer Mission – River Festival 14 & 15 July – a steering committee was formed and had met on two occasions. The major push will focus on Pre –School & Church activities. Investment, in both financial terms & promotion, will be earmarked to ensure we make it a great success. Our large marquee has one of the premier positions at this event to ensure we get maximum coverage to showcase what we do and what we can offer, particularly for young families. We will be looking for church members & Pre –School staff to fully support this most important event.
- Items from Ministers – an in-depth discussion regarding the charitable status of Putnoe. As part of the charitable status of St Mark's, we operate as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This process limits the level of liability of each Church Council member / trustee. Members of the Putnoe Leadership Team had been advised that it was not possible to create a CIO within the Methodist Church, they would only accept an unincorporated body. This would mean that for any minister from St Mark's to continue to be part of Putnoe Heights Single Congregation LEP (SCLEP), as a trustee they would have unlimited personal liability for any liabilities. Legal advice, from the highest level within the diocese and beyond, was that ministers should not participate on an unincorporated body and that CIO status was the route to take. Whilst insurance could be taken out against risk, rather than insuring against such a risk, the risk should be removed in the first place. The ministers were also unsure at this stage how an unincorporated body at Putnoe Heights could legally operate with employment of staff and management of a significant community centre and preschool. In an attempt to resolve the problem, we had been advised by the senior legal officer, the Diocesan Registrar, that it would be possible for the PCC at St Mark's to be appointed as a trustee of the SCLEP at Putnoe Heights and the ministers as representatives would have no personal liability, the liability would fall back to the PCC which is itself an incorporated body, ie limited personal liability of all trustees. Members agreed that this was a solution we should offer in order to move the dialogue further forward and fully supported the proposal. Charlie advised the PCC that Sue Allen had expressed the gratitude of Putnoe Heights to the PCC for their consideration of this.
- Wendy Waters and Edward Parry had attended the Church Wardens Installation at St. Augustine's Church, Limbury on Thursday 18 May. Very well attended and led by The Venerable Paul Hughes. One of the main topics was General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and how it affects us all, both personally & data held by our Church & other associated Groups at Church. We are confident we do comply with these regulations but we should all be mindful at all times when dealing with topic. EP to attend Deanery meetings with the Deanery reps.
- Work on the extension to the Garden of Remembrance was nearing completion, with the installation of three new columbaria and an arbour. Thanks to Jim & Mick Ovenden for their support in assisting the contractor.
- The Woodland Burial AGM had been held on 12 May and included attendance by the accountant. He complimented the Woodland's mission and its on-going financial position. The 2018 Open Day is to be held on 30 June 2-5pm.
- Worship issues – the Sunday morning music group continues to be appreciated by all concerned. After service Coffee & Biscuits is much appreciated as is the involvement of young people in family worship. Junior Church – Linda does wonderfully well with the young people and our sincere thanks go to her (& Ian) for all they do.
- Preschool – the Leadership Team continues to have an overview to ensure maximum support is available for Helen & her team for the success of the Preschool in the long term. Staff, Contracts of Employment & finances continue to be closely monitored.
- Open House is going well with St. Mark's still funding this work, numbers are high. Separate charitable status from our church is being sort. The Bishop had visited on 16 May and it all gone really well.
- Ministry with Children, Pastoral Support Group, Messy Church to be covered later. Wendy Waters indicated she has now given two years notice that she intends to step down as head of Messy Church. We therefore

wished to thank her, even at this stage, for her support & dedication in ensuring Messy Church has been so popular & successful with so many children & families.

- Partnership Quiz – looking at holding this early October (6th?) and Mike Cooper has kindly taken on the task to arrange this – Thanks to Mike.
- Archdeacons visit – this will probably take place in July.
- It is planned to hold a Pauline Study Course on 7 & 14 June with a study on Paul and then Hebrews. An Advent course this year will look at the Old Testament.
- The Mission Event this year will support a local charity, and a number are currently under consideration.
- Car Boot Sale – grateful thanks go to Avril & all her team of helpers for the recent success for a great event on Bank Holiday Monday raising over a £1000. We all look forward to the next one at the end of May.
- Edwards thanked members of the Leadership Team, the Ministers, the Centre Manager and all the helpers in the continuing success of our church. You are all appreciated more than you can imagine.

Centre Management

- It is planned to redecorate the kitchen in the coming weeks. Also, to repaint parts of the side walls of the church.
- Following the last break in, the fire exit door in the church and the door from the garden of remembrance into the kitchen lobby have both been replaced. The kitchen lobby door includes a locking system to allow for parents and carers into Preschool at start and finishing times. Preschool staff ensure that the door is locked at the end of each day.
- In addition, the alarm system has been replaced and can now operate on a key fob system. Also under review is a timer locking system for the Chapel and light poles for the car park area.
- One new regular booking has been made since the last PCC meeting, children's cookery.
- A new tenant will be using the flat in the next few weeks as Julie is moving out. Funding is available to cover the small amount of redecoration needed.

Finance Report and Gift Aid

- Ian presented the income and expenditure results to 30 April and the balances on each church account. Although a small deficit was showing on the main account, this would be cleared once the Quota fees from Putnoe and the insurance payment for the replacement doors had been received. All areas are in line with budget, including reserves.
- Ian ran through the report sent to the Charity Commissioners, which is a requirement of our charitable status. The report is a statement of the churches achievements and performance, in addition to a financial report. As part of these changes, the accounts are now presented in a new format, agreed with the church accountants. It is likely that in future there will be a cost in having the accounts inspected.
- The gift aid claim was to be submitted and will cover a 7 month period. It was planned to look at receiving payments by credit/debit card, specifically for larger payments to the church.
- Thanks were again recorded to Ian for the strong control kept of the church finances.

Preschool

- Sue Jones gave a detailed update to members. There are currently 75 children registered, and a further two will be joining after half term. A number of children will be increasing attended hours after half term.
- Two new staff members have started recently and are doing very well. There is also a special needs helper. Gill, the lunchtime assistant, will be retiring at the end of the summer term. Twenty one children will be leaving for school in the summer and all efforts are being made to replace them, including the major promotion at the Bedford River Festival. Only six children have moved to other Preschools, which is a strong endorsement of the standards being achieved at St Mark's.
- Sue explained the 30 hours funding procedure.
- A number of activities are in place which are funded through Pupil Premium and these include; Zoolab, Teddy Tennis, Ark Farm.
- Members thanked Sue and all the preschool team for their continued hard work.

Openhouse

- All running well. Following the application for charitable status, a number of questions had been received from the Charity Commissioners which Charlie has responded to. One question, referred to trustees who would be both trustees of St Mark's and the new charity.

Story Box

- Numbers are still down a little but all continuing to run well.
- Janet Ibberson advised that a mum was going load details onto a local Facebook page and it will be interesting to see if numbers increase.
- Thanks to Jaana and Valerie for organising.

Chat and Play

- All continues to run very well, between 20 and 30 attend the sessions.
- Thanks to Janine for all the continued hard work in making the sessions so successful.

Junior Church

- All age groups are actively involved and clearly enjoy participating.
- Thanks were once again recorded to Linda Turner for organising the children so enthusiastically.

Messy Church

- Continues to flourish. The last session included the royal wedding.
- It was planned to be involved in the Gathering on the Green on 7 July.
- Helpers were thanked for their hard work and support, new volunteers are always welcome.

Pastoral Support

- All is running well and the work of the group is valued very much by all involved.
- The proposed tea party will now be arranged for later in the year.

Garden of Remembrance/Churchyards

- All of the works in the extension to the garden have been completed and the three new columbaria installed.
- Jean and Malcolm continue to do an excellent job in maintaining the garden on a weekly basis.

Woodland

- We have been busy since the last meeting with 7 burials and 13 interments of ashes, 11 reservations for burial plots and 5 reservations for cremated remains.
- We have a total of 477 burials/interments in the burial register. There are also 359 burial plots and 135 ashes plots reserved.
- Woodpecker and Merlin glades are now open and in use. We will be plotting and opening Lapwing and Nuthatch in time for the Open Day –June 30. There will be another 5 glades available in the future. Skylark Rill is now also open and used for ashes.
- The winter months were extremely wet causing concern to many families, the water lies on top for a long time due to the clay under soil.
- The roadway has become very rough due to heavy traffic, as the equestrian centre has made new arenas. This will be rectified by Simon Bates very soon.
- The opening up of the area has allowed bluebells, cowslips and hopefully, soon, we shall see the pyramid and common spotted orchid.
- We shall be in attendance at the river Festival in our church marquee, 14/15, July and have been invited to the Keysoe village show 1 September.
- We are now in our 11th year, who would have thought it would be so popular. Linda and Edward were thanked for all their continuing hard work in the running of the Woodland.

Mission Matters

- As stated earlier, work is well underway planning for both the River Festival and the Summer Mission on 15 and 16 September. This year's mission fund raising project will be UK and possibly locally based. Any suggestions are welcome, please speak to Sam.

Deanery Matters

- Some of the ministerial vacancies have been filled but a number still remain.

Dates of next meetings

Parochial Church Council

- 11 September
- 13 November 2018

Annual Parochial Congregational Meeting

- 28 April 2019

The meeting closed with The Grace