



St. Mark's Church Parochial Church Council

Minutes of PCC Meeting 11 September 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, Mike Cooper, Margaret Appleton, Janet Ibberson

Minutes of the previous meeting of 22 May 2018

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

Church Leadership Report

- Edward gave details of the 4 September Leadership Team meeting.
- Summer Mission – River Festival 14 & 15 July – the church had a large marquee adjacent to the river and was positioned to get the maximum footfall passed it. The Church, Pre-School, Messy Church & all activities happening at St Marks were showcased in the best possible light. The major push surrounded Pre-School and encouraging children to join us from September onwards. A great deal of thanks is due to all the people who helped over the weekend engaging with visitors & families, standing outside in what can only be described extreme heat and blowing up countless numbers of balloons. Overall we can say it was a great success and we are now looking at involvement for the 2019 River Festival.

Items from Ministers

We were pleased in seeing some encouraging signs of growth in the congregation.

Centre Management

A report to follow on from this report but pleased to note that a new tenant is in the Church flat.

Garden of Remembrance/Churchyards

All was progressing well. It should be noted that the recent continuous spell of hot weather resulted in a number of the plants to suffer greatly and may need replacing.

Woodland Burial

Linda Parry had prepared a report. It has continued to be very busy. Avril Williams has agreed to take over the Administrator's role whilst Linda is recovering from forthcoming surgery.

Worship issues

WW recently carried out an Archdeacon's Inspection at St. Andrews and looked at how they welcome people to church services. They have quite an in-depth approach. St Mark's does have a welcoming team and a balance need to be maintained between welcoming and over enthusiasm putting people off. It was important that welcome was warm but low key and new people did not feel overwhelmed.

Preschool

The leadership team continues to support Helen Harpin & all her staff. To this end Ian Farthing and Edward Parry attended an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) training course at Borough Hall on 12 June. This was followed up by a visit to Preschool on 26 June to discuss various practices & procedures. Edward also attended an evening safeguarding training meeting with all the staff on 6 July.

Open House

This continues to be well supported. The application for separate charitable status from the church had been delayed due to emailing issues at the commissioner's end. However, the matter was back on track and it was hoped that the application process would not have to start from the beginning.

Ministry with Children, Pastoral Support group, Messy Church.

All groups now back from the summer break.

Social Activities

Partnership quiz to be held on Saturday 6 October at St. Marks & to include fish & chips. Mike Cooper to arrange.

Archdeacon's Visitation

This took place on 8 August. Edward Parry, Wendy Waters and Jim Williams were present. It was stated that we passed with flying colours and we should be used as a 'shining example' of how to get the most from church premises, for the benefit both of our congregation and the local community.

Mission Weekend

The event will take place this coming weekend, 15 & 16 September. We look forward to an uplifting time with Adrian & Bridget Plass. Saturday afternoon sees the Family Celebrations start with a Hog Roast BBQ & bouncy castle, followed by a talk and cheese and wine. On Sunday our Harvest Sunday service will be followed by coffee & Harvest Loaf then a lunch which will be served in the church. We will be using outside caterers for the lunch which will ensure all our church family can enjoy this social gathering without having the concern of catering duties.

We will be using the church marquee for the hog roast/seating and therefore we will need as much help as possible to erect the marquee on Friday 14 from 11am.

Car Boot Sales

Our final car boot sale of the season took place on 27 August at which we raised almost £1100 the total for the 4 sales was £3,668 pounds – a splendid result. We are aiming for 4K in 2019! Grateful thanks to Avril and all her team of willing helpers.

Edward recorded his grateful thanks to all the members of the Leadership Team, the Ministers, Wendy 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

- During the summer break redecoration work was completed in both halls, toilets, foyer and kitchen. The hall floors had also been resealed.
- Following approval by the Leadership Team, a lighting consultant is drawing up plans for the installation of light poles in the car park area to improve the overall outside lighting levels.
- Investigations are also being made into the costs of installing an automatic locking system to the outside door of the Chapel.
- The arrival of the fish tank in the foyer has generated a great deal of interest with the groups and visitors to the Church Centre.
- Since the last meeting one group booking has been lost but two new organisations have started.
- A new tenant is now occupying the flat. Her name is Debbie and she has shown interest in volunteering with groups using the Church. Wendy is ensuring that Debbie settles in well and is supported whenever she needs any help.
- Some temporary adjustment of the volunteer rota is to be made covering the next few weeks.
- It is planned to redecorate the office and vestry during the Christmas break.
- Wendy wished to record her thanks to all the volunteers for their ongoing support.

Finance Report and Gift Aid

- Ian gave a detailed review of the Church finances for the full financial year. There were no concerns regarding income and expenditure and all areas were in line with budget. A small deficit was showing on the main account, but this was due to the timing of rental payments. Payment of the quarter three Diocesan Quota had been made.
- A meeting had taken place with the Church accountants in readiness for the annual audit, which had gone very well.
- The next Gift Aid claim was due to be submitted in the next three weeks.
- Investigations were progressing into the Izettle system, which would enable us to receive payments by debit and credit cards.
- It had been agreed to install new lighting in the car park (using lamp poles) and this would be funded by funds raised at the Christmas Craft Fayre.
- Thanks were again recorded to Ian for the strong control kept of the church finances.

Preschool

All was running well and numbers had improved. Members of staff had attended the River Festival event to promote Preschool, and interest had been shown by a number of parents. The whole Church valued the work carried out by Preschool staff in supporting and guiding the children in their care.

Openhouse

All running well. In regard to the application for charitable status, Charlie had responded to questions received from the Charity Commissioners and further details were awaited.

Story Box

15 people had attended the first session of the new term which was encouraging. All was continuing to run well. Thanks to Jaana and Valerie for organising.

Chat and Play

Between 20 and 30 children regularly attend the sessions. Thanks to Janine, helped by her mum, for all the continued hard work in making the sessions so successful.

Junior Church

Linda spoke to members about how well the children got on and, although they were all age groups, the older

children were happy to help the younger ones. Special plans were in hand for the Harvest service. Thanks were once again recorded to Linda Turner for organising the children so enthusiastically.

Messy Church

The new term will start on 18 September and continues to flourish. This will be the eighth year. Wendy, Richard and all the volunteers were thanked for their hard work in organising and running the sessions.

Pastoral Support

All is running well. Wendy is to meet with Caroline Weaver to progress the continuing joint work of Putnoe Heights and St Mark's in pastoral support activities through Telecare and Bereavement support. The work of the group is valued very much by all involved.

Garden of Remembrance/Churchyards

All running well. Jean and Malcolm continue to do an excellent job in maintaining the garden on a weekly basis. Thanks also to Mick Ovenden for his work and support during the interments.

Woodland

- Since the last meeting there have been 11 burials and 22 interments of ashes. 31 reservations for burial plots and 12 reservations for cremated remains. We have a total of 511 burials/interments in the burial register. There are also 376 burial plots and 146 ashes plots reserved. There are 233 plotted graves still available and approximately 60 ashes plots.
- Lapwing, Siskin and Nuthatch are now open and in use. There will be another 5 glades available in the future. Skylark Rill is now also open and used for ashes, we have a further ashes glade which will be available early next year. Wagtail. One plot already reserved before it is open.
- 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 been improved and it has been noted.
- Again we were runner up in the National Death Centre's People's Award "The Best Natural Burial Grounds in the south East". We are always up against larger commercial burial grounds.
- The Open Day on 30 June was again a great success with around 200 attending. It was an extremely hot day but we all survived!!
- Janet and Linda attended the Keysoe village show on the 1 September. We talked with numerous people and had one reservation.

Mission Matters

- Plans were in place for the mission weekend on 15 and 16 September, with around 100 people expected on each day.
- Following discussion at the Leadership meeting, it had been agreed that we should have a pause from the large autumn fund raising mission event this year. Possibly, look to do something nearer to Christmas.

Deanery Matters

- On 21 June St. Marks hosted the Deanery meeting which looked at all aspects of social media and how it impacts on churches & congregations. EP continues to attend the Deanery meetings.
- Two of the ministerial vacancies in the Deanery have been filled. It has been announced that the Arch Deacon, Venerable Paul Hughes, is to retire on 12 January 2019.

Dates of next meetings

Parochial Church Council	13 November 2018
Annual Parochial Congregational Meeting	28 April 2019

With no further business the meeting closed with The Grace.