

Meeting of Trustees of CIO

This meeting was called following the Church Council resolution on 25 June and the failure of the Circuit to accept the Partnership Proposals for ministry

Held 8 July 2015 at St Mark's Vicarage

Present

Rev Dr Sam Cappleman, Reverend Canon Charles Royden, Mr Edward Parry, Mr Ian Farthing, Mrs Elizabeth Bean, Mrs Margaret Appleton, My James Williams, Mrs Wendy Waters

Apologies

Deacon Jane Mills

The meeting opened and closed in prayer

Circuit Proposals

The Trustees considered the proposals which had been put forward by the Circuit for ministry in the Partnership. It was acknowledged that the nature and shape of the ecumenical partnership has substantially changed over the years and not longer reflected our vision for the future of Christian witness at St Mark's.

The Trustees agreed that they did not wish to be a part of the Methodist reinvitation process and that steps should be taken to bring to an end the ecumenical partnership.

In order to provide clarity for ministry at St Mark's and Putnoe Heights Church and the Circuit the Trustees unanimously decided

1. To instruct the Diocesan Solicitor to start the process and advise of the necessary steps to dissolve the CIO so that St Mark's Church be vested in the St Albans Board of Finance as a Trustee under which St Mark's is a solely Anglican Church under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of St Albans, known as The Parochial Church Council. It was agreed that following advice from the Diocese of St Albans that St Marks Church and St Marks Church Pre School will be registered as a Charity and the name of the charity will be The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mark Bedford. The new charity will commence trading on 1 September 2016. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer will make arrangements for the Change of Name to be noted with appropriate bodies and New Bank Accounts will be opened with CAF Bank as previously discussed at Church Council
2. To give notice to the parent denominations and the sponsoring body that they wished to terminate the Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) of the North Bedford Church Partnership at Putnoe Heights and St. Mark's Church.

These actions should be taken without delay.

The decision was taken whilst recognising the extraordinary history of ecumenical co-operation and shared Christian witness across St Mark's and Putnoe Heights Church for many decades. The Trustees were mindful that it was however a necessary decision following the change in circumstances presented by the circuit. Whilst there was disappointment that ministry could not continue unchanged, the Trustees were confident that the churches would continue to share a special relationship albeit from outside the structures of the current ecumenical partnership.

Proposed by Margaret Appleton Seconded by Mr Edward Parry

Carried Unanimously

As part of its process of looking to the future, the North Bedfordshire Methodist Circuit recently issued their proposals for revised deployment of the circuit ministers from September 2016. This was shared with representatives of all of the churches in the circuit. There will be a significant change in the circuit's allocation/provision of Methodist Church ministry to the St Mark's and Putnoe Heights LEP. The Trustees at St Mark's church have considered these carefully and do not believe that they provide a basis upon which to continue with our previous LEP constitution. Therefore since each church is required to register as a charity, Putnoe Heights Church would be constituted as a Methodist Church (LEP) and St Mark's Church would be constituted as an Anglican Church. St Mark's Trustees do not wish to be a part of the reinvitation process. Whilst there would be continued partnership working across the churches this would not be under a formal written contract. Churches do not require formal written constitutions to work together and we are confident that our churches will continue to share a special relationship albeit from outside the existing sharing agreement.