

*St Albans and Welwyn Circuit, Beds, Essex and Herts District*

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Church Council Secretary: Chris Kitchin Tel: 01707 332 470

**Minutes of the Church Council Meeting held on**

**Monday 13 June 2016 at Hatfield Road**

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|  | **PRESENT**  Rev’d Andrew Prout [AP] (Chair), Eric Bridgstock, Sue Davey [SD], Paul Duxbury, Marion Eaton, Philip Eaton, Rev’d Rosemary Fletcher [RF], Chris Hancock, Ros Hancock, Helen Jeffery, Chris Kitchin [CRK] (Secretary), Tony Moody, Val Parker [VP], Joanna Rose [JR], Lesley Saunders, George Selvarajan, Caroline Tough, Peter Wallace [PW], Denise Willingham, Lianne Weidmann. | |
|  | **APOLOGIES**  Caroline Amoss, Val Amoss, Freda Gray, Idy Osibodu, John Scott. | |
|  |  | **Action needed** |
| **1**  **1.1**  **1.2**  **1.3** | **WELCOME and OPENING DEVOTIONS**  The Rev’d Andrew Prout welcomed everyone and Rev'd Rosemary Fletcher opened the meeting with devotions.  AP informed the meeting that Elsie Crowley had died on Sunday 12 June 2016.  He also explained that he, together with Ruth Wallace, had the previous day visited the parents (Rhian and Mike Sheehan) of their only child, Ceri aged 15, who had died that day. Ceri had been baptised at Hatfield Road (HRMC) and the parents had turned to the church for support. |  |
| **2**  **2.1**  **2.2**  **2.3** | **MEMBERSHIP OF THE MEETING**  A list of the membership of the Church Council had been circulated with the agenda. The list was approved.  The name of Denise Willingham was added to the list for this meeting only as a church steward-designate.  AP was to meet the Mission Secretaries and would invite them to nominate from amongst that group whoever wished to become a member of the Church Council. | **CRK**  **AP** |
| **3** | **NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS**  The Secretary had notified one item of business which he would introduce later in the meeting. |  |
| **4**  **4.1**  **4.2**  **4.3**  **4.4**  **4.5** | **APPOINTMENTS**  A *Register of Meetings and Their Purposes 2016-17* prepared by AP with the church stewards had been circulated with the agenda. This brought together information about the purpose of each committee, its constitution accountability, frequency of meetings and constitution. The benefits will be to clarify the existing arrangements and provide a structure within which all will undertake their work.  With the amendment of the title of the Property & Finance Meeting to read "Committee" and the insertion of a reporting line to the Church Council for the Social, Events and Outreach Group, it was agreed to adopt the recommendations contained in the report.  A list of proposed annual appointments for the year 2016-17, and a list of those relating to the additional groups being set up as a result of the *Mission Possible* programme, had been circulated and were adopted with grateful thanks expressed to those who contributed so much to the life of the church.  AP with the church stewards would encourage young people and members who had recently joined HRMC to consider becoming involved in the additional groups.  The list however, after name spelling corrections were made, identified a number of vacancies:   * Babies & Toddlers: A meeting was to take place on Wednesday 15 June 2016 between AP and Sue Edwards with a further meeting planned including a church steward, existing helpers and any other church member who wished to contribute to discussions about the future management and leadership of this group.   It was agreed that:  - from 1 September 2016 the financial arrangements for this group would be brought under the auspices of the church council.  - the appropriate forms would be completed regarding safeguarding.   * Churches Together in St Albans: Denise Willingham offered and was appointed to this representative position. * Justice and Peace Secretary: When appointed the person would become a member of the Mission Secretaries Group.   **The proposals for delegated financial authority within agreed annual budgets were agreed as follows:**   * The Minister, Treasurer and Senior Church Steward may spend up to £250 on any one item without referral to the church council but any such expenditure should be reported to the next church council meeting. * The Minister will be provided with a Benevolence Fund, the sum of £250 being provided annually and used at his discretion. * House Groups expenditure should be recorded and reclaimed from the Treasurer. * Property & Finance Committee   *Treasurer and Property Steward* together, where both agree,  shall have authority to spend up to £250 on any one item without  the need for referral to the P&F Committee but any such  expenditure shall be reported to its meeting.  *Property & Finance Committee* may spend, within the agreed  delegated annual budget, up to £1,000 on any one item without  referral to the church council but any such expenditure shall be  reported to the next church council meeting.  All estimated expenditure in excess of £1,000 shall be subject to  obtaining at least two written quotations, and three quotations  if estimated to be over £2,000, accepting the lowest quotation  unless reasons are recorded for not doing so.  *Signatories on the church bank accounts* were authorised as  follows:  The Treasurer (or in their absence his or her nominated deputy  from the following named) and any one of the following named  jointly to sign off all withdrawals:  Colin Branch, Paul Duxbury, David Mills.  The financial steward appointments were made as follows:  Susan Devi, Sue Danbury, Alan Davey, Sue Edwards, Sheila Fowler, Sheila Finlayson, Freda Gray, Gerry Livesey, Hilary Moore, Joanna Rose, Colin Rowe, John Scott.  The Property & Finance Committee was authorised, with a view to mission, to oversee a thorough review of the church premises and to bring proposals for major redevelopment and modernisation to the February 2017 meeting of the Church Council unless any conversations with Marlborough Road Methodist Church indicated to the contrary.  The following were appointed to the group:  Caroline Amoss, Eric Bridgstock, Freda Gray, Chris Kitchin and Val Parker. The Property & Finance Committee would appoint any additional members and a convenor from amongst the group. | **CRK**  **AP/VP**  **AP**  **PE**  **JR**  **PE**  **P** |
| **5** | **LETTERS OF GREETING AND SUPPORT**  It was agreed that letters should be sent on behalf of the church to the following:  - Rev'd Ann Brown on her departure from the District  - Rev'd David Chapman on his arrival in September 2016 as the new District  Chair  - Rev'd Nina Johnson on her stationing to the South Bedfordshire Circuit in  January 2017  - Rev'd Kathleen Richardson who had conducted the Church Anniversary  service on 12 June 2016  - Mrs Peggy Liffen who had completed a lengthy period of service on the  Church Council. | **AP**  **CRK**  **CRK**  **PW**  **CRK** |
| **6** | **MINUTES**  With the addition of the name of Marion Eaton to those who had apologised, the minutes of the Church Council held on 9 February 2015 were approved and signed as a correct record. |  |
| **7** | **REPORTS**  *Our Calling in the Methodist church is to increase awareness of God’s presence and to celebrate God’s love. Help people to learn and grow as Christians, through mutual support and care. Be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice and make more followers of Jesus Christ* |  |
| **7.1** | **Church Stewards Report**  The Church Stewards Report had been contained in the Annual Report 2015-16 submitted to the General Church Meeting held on 22 May 2016. . | **Noted** |
| **7.2** | **Worship**  Worship Consultation:  The Consultation was held on 7 June 0216 and Its report had been circulated.  Key items were:  ‘*Five Practices … Passionate Worship’ follow-up* – An open meeting was held on 2 March 2016 and an action list prepared for use by the Minister and Church Stewards. This generated many of the initiatives presented at the recent Annual General Church Meeting on 22 May 2016.  A *service planning calendar* looking ahead to 2018 and beyond includes:  - All-Age Harvest Festival brought forward to Sunday 11 September 2016 to allow AP to lead it.  - Advent and Christmas Services 2016 to follow a similar pattern to last year.  - Church Anniversary 11 June 2017 Revd Martin Turner had accepted an invitation to preach.  - AP had proposed an annual routine pattern of services to aid future planning.  *Proposed changes to Routine Patterns of Services:*  - Family Communion once each quarter with a liturgy suited to All Age Worship; Sunday Club to have discretion to decide whether to attend any other communion services.  - Locally-led services (coordinated by Local Preacher Peter Wallace) once each quarter, to tap the talents, experience and testimony of our local congregation. This is intended both to enrich our worship, and to encourage some to consider a call to more formal training (to become Worship Leaders, Local Preachers, or even the presbyteral ministry).  Other topics constantly under review included: prayer ministry, innovation such as more drama as part of worship, music, training, and making the most of the Audio-Visual equipment.  *Church Anniversary 12 June 2016:* It was noted that The Rev Dr The Baroness Richardson of Calow OBE, former President of The Methodist Conference, had kindly agreed to be the preacher. | **AP**  **AP/CRK/VP**  **AP/PW** |
| **7.3** | **Learning & Caring**  Reports from the following were contained in the Annual Report2015-16 submitted to the Annual General Church Meeting held on 22 May 2016:  - Pastoral Report (In addition, it was noted that a Confirmation Service was to  be held at 10.30am on Sunday 17 July 2016 when at least three people had  expressed their commitment to be confirmed.)  - House Groups  - Network Fellowship  - Girls' & Boys' Brigades  - Sunday Club. |  |
| **7.4** | **Service: Church Life**  **7.4.1**  Church General Meeting  The minutes of the Annual General Church Meeting held on 22 May 2016 had been circulated and were noted. |  |
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| **7.4.2**  Property & Finance Report  A report had been circulated and the following progress was noted:  *Work completed since the last meeting*  Cutting down tree & other pruning - £360  *The following will be carried out shortly:*  Asbestos inspection - £740  Replacement heater Aldersgate Lounge - £864  5 year electrical testing - £1000 approx.  *Approval from Church Council is sought for the following:*  Approval was given to the identified expenditure on the following items of work:  - Installation of LED lights\* in Aldersgate Lounge - £438  - Replacement of all the ceiling tiles in Aldersgate Lounge - £555  \* *This provided six replacement lights but it was agreed to install above the music group two additional lights on a separate dimmable circuit at an additional cost which would fall under the new delegated authority of the P&F Committee.*  It was noted that in the future work of this nature and cost would be covered by the new delegated authority agreed earlier in this meeting.  *Quinquennial inspection* recommendation: Repair of guttering, pointing, & chimney stacks – One quotation had been received and further quotations were to be obtained before the P&F Committee made its recommendation to the Church Council.  A quotation for the *renovation of the floor in the large hall* had been obtained. The Committee decided to defer this work preferring to make temporary short term repairs.  *House Group materials* were purchased by the church and individuals would then refund the cost. It was noted that this sometimes meant that the full cost of the purchase was not covered by all the individuals.  It was agreed that the income from bequests should not be used towards general church expenditure but allocated to a specific project.  *Circuit assessment 2016-17*  The Church Council was asked to respond to the request from the Circuit to contribute to the circuit assessment for 2016-17 the sum of £48,500. (£45,900 for 2015/16) and an increase of 5.6%.  The reason for the proposed increase was that in previous years both Marlborough Road, St Albans and St John's, Potters Bar had contributed more per head than had Hatfield Road. The increase would go towards a more equitable assessment. RF stated that Marlborough Road might have come to the end of its ability to contribute at the higher level.  Questions were asked about the allocation of presbyteral staffing, the impact of the departure of Rev'd Nina Johnson to the South Bedfordshire Circuit in January 2017, and the method by which the circuit assessment was calculated.  A circuit review group was looking at future presbyteral staffing and anyone who wished to contribute ideas should contact Ros Hancock as the senior circuit steward.  It was agreed to accept a commitment to contribute the sum of £48,500 in the year 2016-17 to the circuit assessment and the church treasurer would circulate the circuit budget for 2016-17 via the minutes of this meeting.  *Other finance matters for discussion*  The church had nominated three charities for a two-year period: All We Can, The Children's Liver Disease Foundation and the St Albans Women's Refuge.  Funds were gathered and, from time to time, arrangements made to send or present those donations. It was agreed that in the future the church treasurer would use discretion about when funds were transferred to those charities during the two-year period.  In the future, when the new charities were identified, they would be asked to either visit the church to talk about their work or provide information which could be on display from time to time. | **SD**  **SD**  **PE**  **PE**  **PE/CRK** |
|  | **7.4.3**  Communication  It was noted that:   * The Welcome Pack was nearing completion and would soon be available. * The following district, circuit events and services were being held:   + HRMC Confirmation Service, 10.30am Sunday 17 July 2016   + Farewell Service for Chair of the District, Rev'd Anne Brown, Saturday 16 July, 6.00pm, Marlborough Road   + One Sound Visit – 21st to 24th July 2016   Noted that OneSound (choir and orchestra) were visiting  the circuit between Thursday 21 and Sunday 24 July  2016. About 35 young people would be accommodated  overnight at Hatfield Road and provided with meals as  required. There would be a concert on the Saturday  evening at St Paul's Church and OneSound would lead  worship at Marlborough Road on the Sunday.  The Easter Afternoon Tea had been well supported and attracted a number of people from beyond the church.  AP was working on an Introductory Course on Christianity using a connexional resource called *Compass*.  Work was continuing on the offers made as a result of the Talent & Gifts survey. | **AP**  **AP**  **AP/VP** |
|  | **7.4.4**  Safeguarding  The Methodist Church requires that each church's Safeguarding Policy, a copy of which had been circulated, should be reviewed and re-adopted. A copy had been circulated with the agenda, was reviewed and re-adopted for a further year.  During a search of the papers, the Secretary had discovered that various matters needed attention and discussions were continuing with Joanna Rose, the church's Safeguarding Officer, and Sue Davey, Property & Finance Committee to ensure that the church's practice was up to date.  The connexional team was updating polices in relation to Safeguarding and these would be reported to the church council in due course.  JR and AP would be updating the documentation relating to those who are required to complete undertakings and DBS checks. | **SD/JR/CRK** |
|  | **7.4.5**  Service: Neighbourhood & World Issues  The report of this area of the church's work is contained in the Annual Report 2015-16. |  |
| **7.5** | **Evangelism**  **7.5.1**  Moving Forward with *Mission Possible* and *The Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations -* This had been covered by earlier agenda items. |  |
|  | **7.5.2**  Relationship with Marlborough Road  It was noted that the paper which had been adopted at the last meeting of the HRMC Church Council on the relationship between Hatfield Road and Marlborough Road churches was to be considered by MRMC Church Council at its meeting on Tuesday 14 June 2016 when AP would be present. |  |
| **8**  **8.1**  **8.2**  **8.3** | **Any other business**  Church Council as Managing Trustees  The Secretary reported work he had been doing to ensure that the church council fulfilled its legal responsibilities and the obligations placed on it by The Methodist Church.  A meeting has been planned for later in June between Philip Eaton, Joanne Rose and Chris Kitchin, to identify and to put in place the appropriate financial reporting requirements.  A paper describing the role and responsibilities of Church Council members as charity managing trustees was also being prepared and will be circulated in a few weeks time and again with the agenda for the next Church Council Meeting. In the mean time, council members will be asked to complete an annual Trustee Eligibility Declaration provided by the Charity Commission and this would be circulated during the summer. | **JR/PE/CRK**  **CRK** |
| **9** | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**   * Tuesday 11 October 2016, 8.00pm   The meeting closed with prayers at 10.10pm. |  |

**Signed as a true and correct record**

**Chair, Church Council 11 October 2016**