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**HRMC CHURCH COUNCIL Tuesday 12 February 2018 : Consolidated reports**

**Agenda item 5**

**VACANCIES**

There remain two vacancies for the position of Church Steward. Kathhy Whayman has had to step down as Crèche Secretary but we have a rota up until the end of June. The Stewards are looking at how the Crèche might operate in future. There remains a vacancy for a Peace and Justice Secretary or Advocate. A new Treasurer is needed to succeed Philip Eaton when he steps down at the end of August. All other posts are filled. *Andrew Prout*

**Agenda item 8**

**CHURCH STEWARDS REPORT**

**Stewarding**

At the end of October, Marion Eaton stood down as a Steward, leaving the team consisting of only three people, these being Denise Willingham, Lianne Weidmann and me. Roy Vivian kindly agreed to step in until this coming summer’s Annual Church Meeting, simply to maintain a team of just four, let alone our preferred full complement of six, which had been the case up until last summer.

The system we introduced in the autumn, of having Sunday Assistants to work alongside a Steward in the running of our 10:30am Sunday services, has been working well so far but there are down sides. For instance, when stewarding the 10:30am service in pairs, the Stewards could discuss relevant matters amongst themselves. Now, they are more isolated from each other, with little opportunity for such discussion in between the 4/6-weekly Stewards Meetings.

Also, of course, a smaller team means that any tasks normally undertaken by the Church Stewards are spread more thinly across them. This can mean that wheels grind even more slowly, and/or that some things have to be put to one side or discarded altogether.

We ask everyone to consider this situation prayerfully, in the hope that new Stewards will be found to join the team in the summer.

**Marlborough Road**

Another joint meeting between the Ministers and Stewards of MRMC and HRMC took place on 13 November. Each church updated the other on its current position regarding membership, activities and future plans. Joint youth meetings, joint services and the exchange of notices and newssheets continue. Other possible joint enterprises (eg pulpit swaps, Compass Course, Lent Series) were raised. A report was given on Circuit matters (eg stationing).

**Other matters**

Since the last Church Council meeting, the Stewards have been dealing mostly with Christmas preparations, but have also been thinking about the use and operation of audio visuals, hymn book provision, *Towards 125* and photocopiers, as well as the standard concerns, such as pastoral care and human resourcing,

*Val Parker (Senior Steward)*

**WORSHIP**

**Worship Consultation** (no report)

**LEARNING & CARING**

**Pastoral Report**

The pastoral care team at Hatfield Road Methodist Church comprises Rev Andrew Prout, Denise Willingham as Pastoral Steward, Gina Woodhead as Pastoral Secretary, and a team of Pastoral Visitors. We currently have 12 members of the church who are Pastoral Visitors. In addition we have 4 House Group Leaders whose groups also give support to one another.

* The Pastoral Care Team last met in November 2017. Next meeting Tuesday, March 13th 2018
* Current membership is 118 and around 50 adherents (individuals and families)
* We remember Jim Crotty and Joyce Blunden who have recently passed away
* All church members are under the care of a Pastoral Visitor or House Group Leader.
* The membership directory was reprinted in November. Please let Gina know of any changes, mistakes or omissions.
* The Christmas mailing was prepared and circulated in November to all Church members and adherents
* We have welcomed several new families and individuals recently
* A connections lunch will be planned for the summer

Pastoral Secretary: Gina Woodhead 01727 841510 or 07515 821230

**Safeguarding**

The Methodist Church rightly takes the issue of safeguarding very seriously, and following the past cases review recently undertaken, it has reviewed and revised its safeguarding guidelines. Hatfield Road church is currently not fully compliant, and we will need the co-operation of many people within the church to ensure we are fully compliant within the next six months, which is what I am keen to achieve.

The church must have a Safeguarding Policy which is provided to all those holding any position in the church. It should also be available to anyone to read. Our policy was reviewed by Church Council in 2017, and will be brought to the church council again this year for approval, following an update in line with the latest recommendations. Details of those responsible for safeguarding in the church and circuit should also be displayed in the church.

In order for HRMC to be complying with the best practice guidelines issued by the Methodist Church, it is necessary for every role carried out within the church to have a job description, and to be fully assessed in order to ascertain the level of DBS check and/or training that is required. Model role outlines have been produced which can be followed, but I will need to work with Andrew, Lianne, Louise, Sue and the stewards to complete this task.

Some roles within the church require DBS checks to be in place before the role can be undertaken. Anyone not prepared to submit to a DBS check will not be able to undertake these roles. All those in roles currently assessed as requiring DBS checks have those checks in place. There is a rolling plan to ensure each DBS check is renewed every five years as required.

Any person looking to take on a role within the church should complete a declaration form – different forms are required depending on whether a DBS check is required or not. Such forms have not been completed in recent years, so an update process will be required.

Any person holding a role within the church must undertake the Creating Safer Spaces training. Anyone not prepared to submit to the training will not be able to undertake these roles. There are currently some people who are required to undertake the initial training or the refresher training (now due to be taken every four years), and I will be discussing with Ann Huntingford about arranging training in the next couple of months. I have now undertaken the training required to run the CSS training, so I should be able to run some sessions here soon.

All paperwork relating to Safeguarding should be stored in a fireproof safe in the church. A safe has been installed in the church, and both I and Andrew have keys to the safe.

The Methodist Church has produced a pattern to be followed to ensure safe recruitment to roles within the church. In order to ensure HRMC meets the requirements, I would ask that anyone looking to fill a role should first speak to me about the process that must be followed.

A full list of all roles within the church that require assessment and job descriptions will be provided at the meeting on 12 February, together with a list of all those currently required to undertake the CSS training.

I will report on progress towards full compliance at each church council meeting in 2018. *Joanna Rose*

**SERVICE**

**Church Life**

**Property & Finance Committee**

The Property & Finance Committee met on Wednesday 17th January, 2018. It heard from Philip Eaton that there was nothing in the first quarter of 2017/18 to give concern or that was unexpected. A banner rail in the Epworth Room has now been fitted with thanks to Chris Hancock. It was agreed to take on responsibility for the old Circuit Risograph and Photocopier for the time being as these seemed to both provide functions that were useful to us at present. The wooden shelving in the downstairs corridor and the benches in the Upper Room would be offered to the congregation or sold on E-Bay.

The owner of 135-137 Hatfield Road had received outline approval from SADC to convert the two front of road ground floor premises into two new flats, and his business premises in the courtyard into two new flats. We have set out in writing the need for any development to be respectful of our boundaries and rights of access, and will take legal advice should it prove necessary in future. Representation had also been made to SADC in respect of proposed parking arrangements affecting roads around the Church. Any outcome was not yet known.

Work is proceeding on identifying the exact specification for a replacement fire door in the Sanctuary and it is hoped to have this fitted very soon. The cost will be in the region of £1000. **Permission is sought to spend over £1000 if necessary.**

Rev Andrew Prout and Lianne Weidmann hope to take forward the refurbishment of the Upper Room using the £1000 donated in memory of Ceri Sheehan (previously authorised).

The new windows in the Church Hall and Small Hall had been fitted (Authorised Church Council 14/6/17). The external works identified as necessary in the Quinquennial Report of October 2015 including re-pointing, repairs to roof sections, and replacement of guttering had all been completed by Abbey Roofing and signed off by our professional advisor Alan Smith RIBA. The total cost was £25,986.41 and fell within the £30,000 budget agreed at the Church Council 14/6/17). A panic alarm had been fitted to the Disabled Toilet. All the works from the Quinquennial of October 2015 had now been undertaken or are in hand or under consideration.

**Further investigations have been undertaken in respect of the redecoration and renewal of the Main Church Hall.** It is now estimated that a budget of £40,000 will be required consisting of £18000 (New Floor – Rustic Oak) / Lighting £7500 (New LED Strip Lights for hard lighting plus wall lights for soft lighting) / Decorating £7500 / Professional Services £5000 / Contingency £2000. **We hope to go forward with this work in July of this year utilising Alan Smith once again to manage the project and give professional support.**

**Formal consent is now sought from the Church Council to proceed with the redecoration and renewal of the hall and permission to seek consent from the Circuit Meeting and District Consents Panel. The Church Council is asked to indicate how it wishes to raise the additional £10,000 required (Either from Legacies /Gifts or from own Funds and Fundraising).**

A further £15,000 had been received over Christmas as a donation by Mr. Trevor Jones in memory of his late mother. This brings the total of the exceptional gifts and donations we are holding to £101,000 with currently £30,000 allocated to the Main Hall (Church Council 17/10/17) and £1000 to the Upper Room.

The PROD Group working with the Church Stewards had invited feedback in relation to both the Church Hall and a possible reconfiguration of the entrance. In relation to the Church Hall based on feedback to date there seemed to be general agreement that this work needed to be done. In relation to the Main Entrance further consideration of all the comments would be undertaken by the PROD Group. The least favoured options were the most and least expensive models. The most favoured involved an upgrade of the current porch and doors either with the porch enclosed or exposed to the elements at present.

Maintenance of trees within the Church grounds would be undertaken. It was felt that we would need to give consideration to additional or replacement heating in the Church Sanctuary at some point. This could be looked at when we come next to review the Sanctuary Area. A replacement portable partition and display screen was being purchased after one screen broke.

The Annual Property Inspection and Check, and the Annual Property Schedule for 2017 are in the process of being completed (deadline 31/5/18). Matters that have been highlighted as needing further work in relation to Safeguarding requirements, lay employees and the need for a Health and Safety assessment are being followed through, and should all be done by the May deadline. The P&F Committee will also look at our requirements in respect of Fire Safety.

**Towards 125 – Update and Feedback from Consultation**

At time of preparing the report 18 response sheets had been completed.

Church Hall

There was broad agreement that redecorating, re-flooring and new lighting in the Church Hall were all needed. In respect of lighting people welcomed a choice between hard and soft lighting. In respect of flooring two people were not sure wood was the best option. Vinyl, Lino, Carpet and Tiles were all separately suggested as alternatives to wood. Two people suggested we sand down the current floor. Advice given in January 2016 indicated that the floor could be sanded only one more time (£6445) and, with top ups every 2-3 years (£??) might last between 9-20 years. In respect of colours re decoration various suggestions were made. One person suggested opening up the wall on the Hatfield Road through the use of glazing to allow people to see in.

*Note: The P&F Committee have looked at options re surfaces and believes the rustic wood represents the best option. It believes replacing the floor is a better option than re-sanding because it addresses the issue of re-surfacing nails and is more cost effective in long term. It will look at models of colours before making a final choice in respect of paints. It has agreed the principle of a darker shade at lower level and lighter shade at higher lever, and making a feature of the beams.* ***It also recommends relocating the war memorial to the Church Sanctuary and boxing in the ground heating pipes for ease of cleaning and appearance.***

Church Main Entrance

The least favoured options were the most and least expensive models. The most favoured involved an upgrade of the current porch and doors either with the porch enclosed or exposed to the elements at present. Two people were very favourable that we should proceed with one or other of the designs. One person added we should try and open up the foyer in respect of visibility into the Church. One person felt the existing entrance was sufficient and was strongly against any remodelling, and two that child safety was paramount. One person felt none of the designs increased the visual aspect of the church approaching from St. Albans or solved the problem of being able to increase the size of the foyer. One person questioned the benefits against the cost. Two people mentioned additional use of sail flags and billboards.

125th Anniversary

The following were all suggested … Holiday Club / Holiday at Home / Community Days (3) / Café Church or Thinking Suppers (2) / Celebration Service / Good Publicity / Banners / Consultation with Local People / Involve other Churches / Church Picnic / Church Trail / History talk, display or drama (2) / Invite Preachers (3) / Afternoon Tea / Giant Tea Party / Family Events (2) / Quiet Day / Celebration Service / Prefer a single event … Limited resources / Quiz night / Make Souvenirs / Only one person offered to be part of a planning team.

Financial Resources (Gifts and Donations)

The following were all suggested … Paid Café Manager (Tues and Sat) / Manager for Dementia Club / Building Works / New Roof / New Porch (Small Hall) / Mission / Promotion and Advertising Manager (2) / Pastoral Worker (Café / B&T / Daycare) / Internships / Family Worker in Schools / Community Worker (2) / Outreach or Layworker (3) / Should not be used on general expenditure / No view (4)

Summary

**On a number of matters people welcomed greater clarity. It is proposed by the Church Stewards to have an additional General Meeting on March 18th after the Church Service to give people more information and details of feedback. The meeting will also be used to encourage people to come forward to fill current or forthcoming vacant posts with a view to the AGM set for 20/5/18 subject to agreement by the Church Council.**

**Circuit Staffing / Circuit Leadership Team (CLT)**

The Circuit is pleased to announce that with effect from 1/19/18 the Methodist Connexion have directly stationed a presbyter from an Overseas Conference to our Circuit to replace the Reverend Nick Young. The presbyter who has been sent to us is the Reverend Bruce Anderson, from the Methodist Church in New Zealand. He met members of the Circuit Leadership Team and representatives of the 4 churches in the Hatfield and Welwyn Section on Saturday 13th January 2018. This appointment is subject to ratification by the 2018 Methodist Conference.

It is hoped Rev Ali Facey will be able to begin a phased return to work at Easter following a period of sick leave. Ali has been signed off from work since the end of October. Until Ali’s return Rev Andrew Prout is looking after Shenley Methodist Church and Rev Rosemary Fletcher St. John’s in Potter’s Bar. Both Ali and Andrew are approaching their possible re-invitation which will be decided upon in the Summer / Autumn of 2018. They are both currently stationed in the Circuit until August of 2019 and must indicate in the Summer of this year if they wish to extend their appointment beyond that period and for how many years.

The CLT is continuing to work towards a new vision plan with due regard to enabling mission across the Circuit, future finances, and implications should we reduce the numbers of ministerial staff. An interim report on progress is expected very soon and an additional Circuit Meeting has been called for March 14th at Hatfield Road when this one item will be on the agenda.

**Neighbourhood & World Issues**

**Mission Secretaries Action Group**

Rev Andrew Prout had met with Evangeline Selvarajan and Tony Moody in October. It was hoped to have another meeting soon. A Mission in Britain Service will take place on February 11th led by Rev Andrew Prout. It was felt it would be good once a month to have a focus in one of our services on some aspect of mission such as Mission in Britain, World Missions, JMA, our three chosen charities, and other examples of such work.

**EVANGELISM**

**Social, Outreach and Events Group**

Since the very successful Harvest supper, there have been a number of events that have attracted or reached different parts of our church and community. The Fair Trade breakfast was an opportunity for those who rise early to share a time of fellowship and remember how reliant we are on produce from across the world.

Bowling at Garston didn't attract the families we had anticipated, but was very much enjoyed by the adults who had fun together and would like a repeat event!

The Sausage Sizzle was much appreciated as usual, and Louise Bourton's talk at Desserts and Delights about Fair Trade in Ghana was encouraging. The increased profits are used to improve life for the communities who produce the food and crafts, and we sampled a range of fairly traded goods as well as enjoying the food we provided and each other's company.

Our various Christmas events were attended by members of the community around the church as well as those from our regular fellowship, and this is something we would like to encourage and extend this year. Publicity has been done through the Cafe, Brigade, church notices and personal contacts.

The Beetle Drive was lots of fun with a very mixed age range, which attracted our own congregation and friends. The variety of events is intended to offer opportunities to meet for fellowship, fun and to further the extension of God's kingdom. *Jan Kitchin*