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

Minister: Rev Andrew Prout, 16 Gainsborough Avenue, St Albans, Herts AL1 4NL | 01727 851834

Minutes of Church Council

Wednesday 29th June 2022 7.45pm at Hatfield Road (In person)

***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. At Hatfield Road Methodist Church we work out this calling through our adopted statements of purpose, mission and vision, and annual intention.*

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| **1** | **Apologies were received from:**  Freda Gray, Joe Kinchenton, Linda Kinchenton, Peter Wallace, Rev Rosemary Fletcher, James Appiah, Stuart Johnson, Denise Willingham, Maggie Dodd, Lianne Weidmann  **Present**  Rev Andrew Prout, (Chair) (AP) Angela Spriggs (Notetaker) (AS) Val Parker (VP), Ros Hancock (RH), Eric Bridgstock (EB), Gina Woodhead (GW), Tomas Cvrcek (TC), Joanna Rose (JR), Angela Andrews (AA), Caroline Tough (CT)  Devotions were held. |
| **2** | **The Membership of the Church Council** as at 290622 was agreed. |
| **3** | **Minutes**  The Minutes of the Church Council meeting held on Tuesday 15th March 2022 were agreed with no amendments.  The Minutes of the Annual General Church Meeting held on 15th May 2022 were noted. |
| **4** | **Appointments and Vacancies** [Vacancy – CFW (see Lay Workers Report): will be discussed later.]  **Vacancy – Sunday Club Co-ordinator**  This vacancy has arisen since Emma Williams’ (Children and Families Worker) departure.  **Action: AP will meet with Sunday Club leaders to discuss the way forward.**  **Vacancy – Church Council Secretary (From 010922)**  AS is standing down as Church Council Secretary at the end of August after 3 years. AP expressed his gratitude to AS for all she has done.  **Action: AP is approaching potential replacements.**  **Church Council representation at the Circuit meeting**  There are two current vacancies for representatives from the Church Council to the Circuit meeting: one existing vacancy and one to replace Denise Willingham’s representation as senior steward. Tomas will succeed DW as the Senior steward in attendance. Currently JR, EB and Chris Hancock (CH) attend (EB is ex officio and CH there is another capacity). AP asked for volunteers at the meeting. None came forward. RH already attends in another capacity and agreed to represent the Church Council as well, so she would have a dual role. It was proposed to ask Denise Willingham if she would like to continue to stand on the Circuit committee as a Council representative. (**PMN: DW is willing**)  **Agreement of Appointments for 2022-2023 including approval of Baptismal Roll Job Description**  AP asked if everyone was content with the list of appointments.  JR noted that Social Outreach and Events Group (SOE) list of appointments should include representatives from Marlborough Road and Cornerstone as the SOE will be expanded to include Marlborough Road. JR stated that she had asked for a representative but no one had yet come forward. The SOE is due to meet in the near future. RH proposed that if there are no volunteers, the current SOE could organise an event and invite Marlborough Road.  **Action: JR to continue to seek SOE representatives from MRMC and Cornerstone, and organise a SOE meeting.**  Spelling mistakes were identified in Tomas’s name, and Johanna Mason’s name.  **Action: AS to amend spelling mistakes (Post meeting note: now amended)**  Susan Devi still has contact with Church.  **Action: AP to check SD is able to continue as CTSA Rep.**  Following Joe Kinchenton’s departure TC noted the current vacancy for steward representation at the Property and Finance Committee. AP confirmed that the stewards were responsible for deciding among themselves which of the 5 stewards will attend the Committee, and that this did not necessarily have to be TC. The stewards divide the responsibilities for representation at Church committees between them. AP stated that he was mindful of the additional responsibilities of senior stewards.  The Church Council agreed that it was content to adopt the list of appointments, subject to the above adjustments.  **The Baptismal Roll Secretary job description was agreed.** |
| **5** | **Letters of Greeting and Support / Correspondence**  On behalf of the Church Council AP wished Joe and Linda Kinchenton well as they move from the Circuit and Linda begins her new appointment.  **Action: AS to send letter of appreciation to Joe and Linda on behalf of the Church Council**  On behalf of the Church Council AP extended his good wishes to Rev Rosemary Fletcher and James Rowley on Rosemary’s retirement in July and as Rosemary takes on a new role in Salisbury. AP wished to recognise RF’s particular contribution to HRMC, as Superintendent Minister, standing in during AP’s sabbatical, preaching, and representation at Church Council. It was noted that RF’s last preaching date at HRMC will be 9th August. Opportunities to recognise these contributions will be announced in Church.  **Action: AS to send letter of appreciation to Rev Rosemary Fletcher and James Rowley on behalf of the Church Council**  Colin Branch wishes to stand down from the Property and Finance Committee after nearly 40 years. He has carried out sterling work, including maintaining the Church Gardens.  **Action: AS to send letter of appreciation to Colin Branch on behalf of the Church Council**  Chris Kitchin and Graham Danbury stood down from the Church Council at the AGM. AP noted all the work they did on the Church Council.  **Action: AS to send letter of appreciation to Chris Kitchin and Graham Danbury on behalf of the Church Council**  AP noted that he took greetings of the Church to Muriel Ison who has recently moved into Lyndon, the Salvation Army residence in Sandridge. He stated that he would be visiting Graham Smith in hospital in Watford on the following day and had sent a message to Julia Barber who is in Watford hospital in the Covid ward. |
| **6** | **Matters Arising not appearing elsewhere and Action Tracker #**  **Action tracker**  A number of amendments to the Action Tracker were proposed:   * Line 20 Reference to the ‘new website’ can be removed * Line 16 Reference to charities: this is out of date and the named charities are due for change.   **Action Church Stewards: To be invited to consider which charities the church should support this year**   * Line 21 Way forward proposals can be removed. * Remove red writing * Line 14 is completed and can be removed. * Line 13 marked that a new mission statement was presented at the June meeting   **Action AS: To amend Action tracker as required (Post meeting note: now amended)**   * **Same Sex Marriage Licence**   AP reported that all the paperwork done for registering HRMC for same sex marriages was now complete and will be delivered in the week. He anticipated the church will receive its licence to hold same sex marriages by 1 September. AP hoped that he will be able to announce that the Church is licensed to hold same sex marriages at the next Church Council meeting.   * **New Testament Church of God** intend to use our premises on a Sunday afternoon when work at Fleetville Community Centre begins. No start date has yet been given for this work. The building work will likely last six months * **Eco-Church – Registration & Pursuit of Bronze Award (Presentation DW and RH)**   RH and DW have been exploring the scope for HRMC to register as an Eco-church under the A Rocha UK award scheme and pursue a Bronze Award (see <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>).  RH showed a BBC video urging the world’s inhabitants to act quickly to prevent climate change. She gave a presentation about the A Rocha programme and the survey that churches have to complete to qualify for an award. She proposed that the Church worked towards a Bronze Award.  It was noted that pursuit of the Awards provided a framework to prompt Church discussion on ways in which works sustainably , and in identifying ways where the Church can improve. e.g. to consider whether gas and electricity supplies were on a green tariff. The main purpose is to prompt the Church to consider these issues, not for the Award in itself. However the certificate would demonstrate to visitors that we are considering sustainability in all our actions.  RH prayed about climate issues and our response to it.  It was proposed that the Church uses the A Rocha survey questions to guide and take us forward to become an eco-church.  The proposal was unanimously adopted.  **Action RH and DW: To drive forward the pursuit of a Bronze Award**  **Action RH and DW: To make available one hard copy of the survey questions for accessibility.**  **The questions are also available online here:** [**https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Eco-Church-Survey-v2-January-2018.pdf**](https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Eco-Church-Survey-v2-January-2018.pdf)  A discussion was held about the recycling provision at the Church which is currently minimal. Our refuse collectors Biffa do not sort it.  **Action Property Committee: To look at recycling provision at the Church, including reviewing how other churches do their recycling.** |
| **7** | **Matters from Circuit, District and Connexion #**  AP noted a new date for the next Circuit Meeting 060722 at Ludwick Way 7.45pm  AP noted the following appointments:   * The appointment of Rev David Jebb from 010922 (Superintendent, SJPB, RUFC, Shenley) * The appointment of Rev Rosemary Mutopo from 010922 (Oxlease, Birchwood, Ludwick Way, Digswell)   AP noted that as the Rev Mutopo is still on Probation she will be committed to a study day each week which will take time from her weekly availability. Rev David Jebb will be supervising her.   * The appointment of Deacon Nigel Perrott from 010922 (St. Albans including Cornerstone and LW). * The Circuit Farewell service for Rev Rosemary Fletcher, Rev Bruce, Deacon Linda Kinchenton and Rev Ali Facey on Sunday July 17th 2022 6.30pm at MRMC * AP has ministerial oversight of St John’s Potter’s Bar from 010322 – 310822, until Rev David Jebb starts in post * There will be a Welcome Service for Rev David Jebb, Rev Rosemary Mutopo and Deacon Nigel Perrott on Friday 020922, 7.30pm at St Johns Potters Bar * Re-Invitation and Stationing in September 2023   AP stated that after a great deal of thought and prayer, conversations with chair of District, and with his supervisor, he has decided to move on in September 2023, when his current stationing period ends. AP stated that it will be hard to leave the friendships developed. However, he stated that whoever succeeded him would have 5 years to embed the new St Albans section. This is more than AP would be able to give. AP emphasised that this was still 12 months away, and he will be giving 100% to the Church over the next 12 months.  AP stated that he would include the news in the HRMC notice sheet the following week to notify the congregation. |
| **8** | **Reports**  The following reports were received:   * Senior Church Steward # (TC)   There was discussion about the Holiday Club at a recent joint stewards meeting. The Holiday Club had been postponed until February following Emma’s departure. However it was proposed that there was sufficient support and will to run a Holiday Club in October as last year even if in a shortened form. Emma left an organisation plan showing a 6 month lead-in time. It was agreed that it was possible to organise in less time than the 6 months previously used, because the Church is now familiar with the procedure.  **Action: AP will organise a meeting for the Holiday Club before the end of summer. An appropriate date and group champion will be chosen at the meeting.**  TC as Senior Steward has been asked to put names forward to Stuart Johnson on the Circuit Leadership Team for the Invitation Committee to appoint Andrew’s successor. TC, Helen Jeffrey and AA were agreed.  **Action: TC to send names (TC, Helen Jeffrey and AA) to Stuart**  AP reported that a joint stewards’ meeting has been held with MRMC. These are held approximately every 2 months. At the meeting they identified priorities over the next 12 months. AP reported an agreement to review and bring together some of the two Churches’ communications including the two websites. Both had common and overlapping elements, for instance, details on the Anna Chaplaincy and Cornerstone. The two websites could be retained with a new portal or there could be a new website altogether. AP reported that Maggie Dodd is willing to help with her expertise in graphic design if needed but would need to be employed in a professional role. This will have an additional financial cost.  RH noted that a considerable amount of work had gone into the existing website. The website was only useful if it was kept up to date. Chris Hancock had posted 95% of the material on it. RH noted that CH currently hosts and pays for the website but could not continue to do so if another website is proposed. This should be paid by the Church.  It was noted that the right people needed to be involved including a professional webmaster. It was agreed that an active webmaster able to commission work is needed, and that the Church needed someone to check the website every 6 months. RH highlighted that CH was a professional webmaster. It was questioned whether the stewards were the right team to take this on as it was not within their immediate expertise and remit. It was argued that the recently disbanded Comms team were more appropriate and should be reinstated. It was noted that the Stewards would ensure that the right people were on the Committee. CH would be included in this as well as Tony Osibodu from MRMC, and Lianne Weidmann from HRMC (who was in the last Comms Group) would be invited. The Stewards have ideas for further people to approach.  A joint St Albans logo will be needed for any new web-site or portal. It was also proposed to have a joint newsletter, expanding and complementing the existing Marlborough Round.  **Action: AP to report feedback to next Joint Stewards Meeting / CH to invoice EB for any costs with HRMC Web-site**  Worship Consultation # (AP):  AP stated that there had been 4 responses to a congregational survey asking for feedback on the online services. The deadline was extended until the end of July. EB stated that the Church had received £20 with a note attached, saying, ‘Thank you. For the collection from one of your Youtube listeners’.  The meeting noted that there were discrepancies between the Circuit plans and the Stewards’ rotas on when the children come into the service. It was also noted that the wording on church stewards’ script relating to Sunday Club needs changing to clarify when Sunday club is taking place and the arrangements in the service. The wording still reflects earlier / pre-COVID arrangements.  **Action: TC (Senior Steward): To review and amend church stewards’ script to clarify arrangements for Sunday Club.**  Reports received without comment:   * CFW Management Group (AP) * Anna Chaplain (MD) and Anna Chaplain Management Group # (AP) * Safeguarding # (JR) * Lay Workers Group # (JR) / Note proposals re CFW * Property & Finance # (EB)   EB drew the Council’s attention to the attached financial report. HE added that the interest rate on the account has increased to .77%. £82 in interest was received. In May. **Post meeting note: The rate has since increased. At the time of writing it was 1.37%**  EB presented the expenditure and accounts on the lay worker projects (see attached document) from their start until 29 June.  Apart from Emma’s first two salary payments (which were handled by MRMC as HRMC did not have online banking) all payments have been made by HRMC.  HRMC have also received all grants payments.  As a consequence, MRMC owed about £18,000 to HRMC.  ***Post meeting note:  this was settled on 2 Aug 22****.*  To date, all expenditure has been covered within HRMC cash flow.  When the balance goes negative, funds will be drawn down from the £50,000 reserves have been authorised by CC.  All HRMC lump sum pledges have been received, and standing orders of between £100 and £200 are received each month..  It was asked whether the Church would have to repay the grants from Joseph Rank following Emma’s departure.  EB stated that the Joseph Rank Trust (JRT) are not requesting a refund of any of their second year grant, despite Emma working only 10 months of the period.  The Lay Workers’  group is proposing to recruit a part time worker over a two year period to support the Babies and Toddlers work, rather than a one year full time post.  JRT indicated that they would prefer the appointment to be for a year.  ***PMN:  JRT have since expressed support for a two-year part-time appointment focussed on supporting Babies and Toddlers, rather than the Youth or Sunday club work***.  The Babies and Toddlers work offers the greatest mission opportunities.    AP thanked EB for the substantial work done by him and the Lay Workers Group. He noted that HRMC and MRMC would look to continue the work that Emma began over the next 2 – 2 ½ years, focusing on what is practical in terms of focusing resources.  The Council confirmed that it was content to delegate the appointment of another Children and Families Worker (or equivalent in that role) to the Lay Workers Group.  It was asked whether the Holiday Club work would fall within the new part-time contract.  It was stated that the new role would be for minimum 8-10 hours a week. Exact hours will be determined as finances and position re grants become clear. It was suggested that the worker could be asked to do overtime, or that some hours could be kept back for special events. The role could also be linked in with Create and Celebrate services. It was noted that the new role was not exclusively for Babies and Toddlers support and could include some church family work. It is also noted that without somebody in place, both existing Babies and Toddlers groups could not be sustained. It was noted that Gina Woodhead and Caroline Tough did excellent work, but they needed a leader to support and take responsibility for the groups.   * Annual Church Return 2021 (AP)   AP noted that the Annual Church Return 2021 has been submitted.  Annual Report 2021-2022  The Church Council adopted the Annual Report 2021-22 as presented at the AGM for the purposes of the Charity Commission .  **Church Policies #**  The Church Council noted and agreed the Statement of Purpose, Vision, Mission and Intention 2022-23.  The Church Council noted and agreed the Register of Meetings for the year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023  The Church Council adopted the following **Church Policies** for the year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023:   * Financial Management : Financial Controls * Financial Management : Scheme of Delegation * Financial Management : Benevolence Fund * Financial Management: Charitable Giving * Financial Management : Reserves * Babies & Toddlers Group * Lone Worker * Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults – only one that was new. Succeeded with slight amendments. * Use of Premises and Charges – has been an updated one – extra clause in charges – if hiring, everyone attending meeting has from time to extra fees.   (Noted that charges and lettings policy has been amended with extra requirements covering COVID)   * Data Protection and GDPR (As per Connexional Policy) * As an Employer (Caretaker/CFW/Anna Chaplain) Health and Safety at Work, Grievance Procedure, Disciplinary Procedure, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (As per Connexional Lay Employment Advisory handbook)   It was noted that the Safeguarding Policy is kept on the noticeboard in the corridor in a clear envelope.  It was noted that all managing trustees who work with vulnerable adults and children have to have DBS check. This is required by the Charity Commission.  EB noted that a recent Property and Risk assessment identified the need to record fire alarms, etc. in a Fire Safety Log.  He has procured a Log and is filling it out before installing it in clear sight in the Vestry.  The Church Council agreed to extend the permission for Living Waters to worship for further 12 months from 1/9/22, should they require it. Currently they have not asked to do so.  AOB  EB reported on progress on plans to refurbish the Small Hall.  He had approached three builders.  One has visited and submitted a priced proposal.  Another phoned wanting to visit at very short notice, which was not supportable.  The third has not responded.  The proposed works are for new windows, doors, disabled access, lighting, radiators, power supply, kitchenette and removal of the partition.   The intention is to create a fully accessible, self-sufficient space for use by the church or outside groups.  ***PMN:  Two builders chased but no response; others being sought.***  It was noted that there was still no date for the New Testament of God to request permission to worship at the Church. Updates will be provided when available. |
| **9** | **Dates of future meetings**  The dates of future meetings were noted as follows:  Mon 7th November 2022 / Tues 28th February 2023 / Wed 28th June 2023  (See Perpetual Calendar Below) |
| **10** | **Closing Devotions were held.** |

**HRMC Membership of Church Council at 29th June 2022**

Church Stewards appointments take effect on 1 July each year. Elected Reps with immediate effect.

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| **Position** | **Name** | | **Date Appointed** |
| **Circuit Ministers**  SO 610 (1) (i) | Rev Rosemary Fletcher (Superintendent) | | 09/2013 |
| Rev Andrew Prout (Minister Pastoral Charge) | | 09/2014 |
| SO 610 (1) (i) & SO 610 (4) (i) | Deacon Linda Kinchenton | | 11/2021 |
| **Church Stewards** SO 610 (1) (vi) | Tomas Cvrcek (Senior Church Steward) 1a | | 05/2018 |
| Angela Andrews 1 | | 05/2018 |
| Denise Willingham1 | | 05/2016 |
| Lianne Weidmann1 | | 06/2017 |
| Joe Kinchenton1 | | O7/2019 |
| Noelene Browning 1 | | 10/2019 |
| **Church Treasurer** SO 610 (1) (vii) | Eric Bridgstock | | 06/2018 |
| **Pastoral Committee** SO 610 (1) (viii) | Gina Woodhead 3 | | 01/2009 |
| **Church Council Secretary** SO 610 (1) (ix) | Angela Spriggs | | 10/2019 |
| **One Circuit Steward appointed by the Circuit Stewards** SO 610 (1) (xii) | Stuart Johnson | | 09/2020 |
| **Not less than six representatives nor more than fifteen elected annually by General Church Meeting** (SO 610 (1) (x) | Caroline Tough1 [Elected by ballot] | | 05/2012 |
| Ros Hancock 1 | | 05/2015 |
| James Appiah | | 06/2021 |
| **Plus up to 15 additional persons appointed by the Church Council to ensure that all areas of the church’s life are adequately represented and in particular that, wherever possible, young people are included in its membership** SO 610 (1) (xi) as follows: 5 & 6 | | | |
| **Sunday Club and Youth Superintendent** | Vacancy |  | |
| **Property & Finance Committee** | Eric Bridgstock (Chair of Meeting)  Vacancy | 06/2019 | |
| **Mission Secretaries Action Group**  **(Mission in Britain / World Missions / JMA / Christian Aid / Justice & Peace)** | To Be Appointed | - | |
| **Worship Consultation Convenor** | Peter Wallace | 09/2015 | |
| **Safeguarding Officer** | Joanna Rose | 05/2009 | |
| **Other** | Freda Gray [Catering & Property]  Val Parker  Maggie Dodd (Anna Chaplain, observer) | 08/2017  06/2019  11/2021 | |
| **Elected to Circuit Meeting**  (Ex Officio Officers) SO 510 (1) (vii)  (plus 3 others) SO 510 (1) (viii) | Church Steward [Ex Officio]: Denise Willingham  Church Treasurer [Ex Officio]: Eric Bridgstock  Joanna Rose  Chris Hancock [Ex Officio]  Vacancy | 09/2015  09/2017  XX/XXXX | |