



St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury Minutes

**Parochial Church Council – 20 March 2024 at 7.15pm in
St Katherine's Hall**

Present:

Pete and Anne Scull
Benjamin Hilton-Turvey
Keith Hilton-Turvey
David Houghton
James Smith
Ian James
Sue Cooper
Sue Simpson
Stephen Cheetham
Maria Dineen

Apologies:

- Cath and Andrew Beech
- Will Wake

1233. Minutes of meeting held on 15 January - approved

1234. Minutes of Standing Committee meeting held on 29 February - approved

1235. Safeguarding - Nil of note

- No known safeguarding issues

1236. Vision/Awayday follow-up

- See attached report dated February 2024.

1237. The following teaching sessions are being delivered on the following dates as part of Sunday morning worship:

- 07 Apr Foundations of our Faith: The Word of God, in person and in print
- 21 Apr Living a faithful life: The 10 commandments and The Lord's Prayer
- 28 Apr The sacraments: Baptism and Communion
- 05 May Foundational beliefs: The Creeds – Apostles in particular
- 19 May Empowered Christian Living: The Holy Spirit – Pentecost
- 26 May The God we believe in and worship Trinity Sunday

- Christine Walters is arranging a meeting on 17th April to discuss the possibility Teatime Praise. Initiative to be held in St Katherine's Hall on the 4th Sunday of each month at 4.00 pm. The aim is to provide an Anglican type of worship for all ages including children serving a light meal after the service.

Communications

1238.

- Video streaming is working
- Pew sheets is under review
- Iknow Church email – Christine Walters doing good job, at coordinating and managing this for all parishioners on email.

There is now an enquiries @ St Michael's email, is monitored by one of the Churchwardens and the enquiry or issue passed to the right person.

- Contact with the Diocesan Social Media expert (Sarah Whitlock) is still outstanding,

Defective electronic equipment

1239.

- Ian James asked about the overhead projector - it is under review, but Sony is not quick, and has adopted a corporate stance. It may take some time to resolve with Sony. The facts are: When it was set up it failed in 2-minutes. We are waiting for feedback from Sony
- Automatic giving machine is broken, and Stephen Cheetham is on the case.

Worship Review and Development Group

1240.

- See attached report dated February 2024 which was the subject of discussion. It was felt that the suggested wording of Terms of Reference required some additional elucidation – agreed in principle – the rector and churchwardens will expand scope so transparent but not unnecessarily limiting or restrictive.

Maria Dineen considered the wording to be too bland and to have no clear boundaries, which is unusual for a TOR. Normally there is more than one, and they are measurable so that there is an accountability and audit route to assess the productivity of the group and the value of its input.

1241. The following revised Terms of Reference were agreed:

- 1) *The Worship Review and Development Group (WRGD) will advise the Rector, churchwardens and PCC on matters relating to Sunday and occasional services, together with giving input on future strategy for development of worship and liturgy. Decisions on the form and content of services will be taken by the Rector in consultation with the wardens and PCC.*
- 2) *Membership of the Group will be approved by the PCC.*
- 3) *The group's activities should include but are not limited to: -.*
 - a) *Working with the Rector, Churchwardens and PCC in developing future strategy(ies) for worship and liturgy.*

- b) *Reviewing and producing ideas about alterations and adaptations to the orders of service.*
- c) *Planning & promoting special services (e.g. Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday, Remembrance, Thanksgiving).*
- d) *Generating ideas for evolving SMAAs approach to worship to optimise accessibility and interest.*
- e) *Producing ideas to involve and integrate children and young people more effectively.*
- f) *Thinking through options for outreach events that can be delivered by SMAA, on its own, or in partnership with other churches. All such events are targeted events for the Ledbury community (e.g. the Walk of Witness).*

4) *The group will circulate notes of its meeting to the PCC.*

Finance

1242. Stephen indicated that, in short, we are in a precarious position.

- Our revenue is flat, and costs are increasing. £120k for 2023. Furthermore, we have no plan for increasing giving, and this must be a major focus for SMAA. If in 2024 we have an income of £120k we should break even.
Note: The cost of temporary heating is accounted for in 2023 figures and accounts.
- Charitable giving: Policy states this is currently 10% of gross congregational giving. (i.e. before essential expenses are paid). Honouring this commitment will put SMAA accounts in deficit. (I.e. 'in the red'). From a financial accounting perspective, good governance, and because of the charity commission rules (with which SMAA must abide) the policy is fundamentally flawed. A fixed commitment to 10% as an absolute is not sustainable. The treasurer stated clearly that our current policy is misleading. We must be clear about our outgoings first and then of the £ left we can make an informed decision regarding charitable giving.
- Stephen Cheetham proposed a change to the policy, so we consider charitable giving after the accounts formulated and then give a % of surplus. This provoked strong debate.
- The conclusion of the debate was SMAA must aim for 10% of gross income congregational giving, when the accounts show this can be afforded, and does not cause a breach in the PCCs requirement to comply with Charity Commission rules, nor put the day-to-day financial management of SMAA in jeopardy.
- Ian James continued to voice strong opposition to anything less than 10%, and that other expenditures should be reduced. This sentiment was echoed by Peter Scull. Two expressed thoughts were, leaving the church with no heating and reducing the expenditure for music by utilising video music at some church services. Neither option was considered sensible or viable by other PCC members present.
- Stephen Cheetham confirmed that for 2022 charitable funds had been allocated but at the time of the PCC meeting not yet as paid
- Stephen Cheetham confirmed that the 2023 charitable donations had yet to be paid. (This is set at a figure of less than 10% of congregational giving because there simply are not the funds to deliver 10%)

- £6k is available for 2023. Not an insubstantial amount of money. Amount agreed with 2 abstentions.
- The charities SMAA supports were identified via sub-committee and agreed. The issue of contention is the amount of £ to be paid out to charities. However, for 2024 it is right that 'who' is receiving benefit from SMAA should be reviewed.
- For 2024: Use best endeavours to meet 10% giving target of income
1 x abstention 0 x against

Note: We need to make our congregation aware of the need to give more on a weekly basis/regular basis to keep the church 'on the road.' If the congregation are not aware of the dire straits the church is in, it cannot respond accordingly.

Good news (financial):

- Substantial legacy £20,000 daughter of a vicar in the 1920's
- Donation £12,000 (anonymous) - thank you from PCC
- £12k in kitty for new heating system

Annual Accounts accepted or not: Accounts unanimously accepted.

Fabric

1243.

- **Permanent heating solution:** It is extremely challenging to calculate the heating needs of the church. In the short term we need install electric heating in the pews, and longer term a more modern approach to give ambient heat. Huge amount of work to find a solution. Therefore, this continues as work in progress.
- **Roof valley repairs:** The cost is, £5,500 and contractor promises that he /she will maintain cost. There will be a new protective layer when done.
- **Upper rooms:** We now have good specifications and plans that need to be made known to the congregation. An allowance of £2k budget for each necessary advisory consultant is required, and the PCC need to endorse this. The building fund/designated fabric fund needs to fund the spend. The purpose of the work is to create a meeting room upstairs with a single person lift & open the existing stairs up with glass. SMAA has a structural surveyor. The work is not low priority – without the upper room it limits usage of the chancery. There are essential works that need undertaking in terms of repair, this provides longer opportunities.

See paper attached re Consultancy Fees for future refurbishment of rooms above North Porch dated March 2024. PCC vote on £2k budget per advisory consultant (of which there are 2): 3 abstentions, 6 yes one no

- **Catering facility in Chapter House:** Scope of work needs to be clarified, then we can get ideas together. Have a good architect. In progress – work continues
- **Pew reordering:** Faculty granted with one condition (to ensure castors do not mark the flooring)
- **Trinity altar:** People in Sussex need to come and collect it. They need their archdeacon to give written permission. Aim is altar will go soon after Easter.
- **Spire:** The last work was undertaken 15 years ago. Not good work. There is deterioration and we need to get a drone up to survey the Spire and work out what needs to be done. Tim Keyes has £24K for Bell Tower it is possible that some of this money can be used for the Spire on the basis that the two are inextricably connected.

- Ian James asks if there is scope to reallocate money. If a fund is restricted it cannot be reallocated (unless the donor agrees).
- Designated can be re-allocated. ALPHA evangelism might be a possibility in terms of re-allocation. Ian James said we do not need to decide now. However, we need to spend serious £ on fabric and this is likely to put us into the red.

Action points and matters arising from previous meetings not previously discussed

1244.

- Church silver: Nil of Note

Other business

1245. James Smith raised the issue of the recent Churches Together United Services in Ledbury.

- He felt it was dishonouring that the Methodist Minister Mary Jolly, could not lead the service at SMAA. Felt it dislocated SMAA from the other churches. Keith Hilton-Turvey was asked to explain his reason for not allowing Mary Jolly to lead the service. The main reason given was he does not allow Anglican ordained women to take main services in SMAA and therefore it would have disrespectful to them to allow a woman from a different denomination to do so. His position is well known, and as soon as he was aware of the plan (which was shared at noticeably short notice) he addressed the issue in terms of what could be accommodated. As a result of the Rector's decision, and in his absence, the church wardens needed to work with partner colleagues across the churches and also Bishop Richard to find a solution so the united service could proceed with all churches represented. The solution was agreed with the Rector upon his return from his usual day off and prior to the service, which was held at Ledbury Baptist Church.
- James Smith reiterated that he does not understand how ordained women are allowed to lead services at St Katherine's and Eastnor but not SMAA. Keith Hilton-Turvey gave his perspective and asked James what his scriptural understanding was. It is fair to say there is sizable difference of perspective, and a theological debate that is too complex for a PCC meeting.
- David Houghton, who was chairing this element of the meeting by prior agreement, interjected: He stated with clarity that he did not see benefit of looking back, or going over old ground of well-rehearsed comments, and that we need to look forward, but exploration of what happened, and decision arising from the episode are continuing. Until these are complete there is little point in presently continuing the discussion. An undertaking was given that when applicable a further conversation with the PCC will take place. The importance of women in ministry was acknowledged.
- James Smith pressed regarding the Dean of Hereford cathedral, who is coming to the church to speak. Keith Hilton-Turvey is clear that is different from leading a church service
- Maria Dineen observed that the issue of women in ministry is a much larger and richer subject than the singular issue of women as ordained vicars, and whether they can preside at SMAA. Keith Hilton-Turvey is not against women in ministry, nor in leadership. The issue of contention is contained to women as ordained ministers. It is important that the wide spectrum of roles for women in ministry is not lost in a polarized debate.

1246. The question of whether, because of Keith's stance, 'churches together' in Ledbury has been jeopardized. It seems not as stated above conversations continue. James Smith

noted that Keith's views about ordained women are not representative of many church members.

1247. Date of next meeting – 20 May

Maria Dineen

Worship Review and Development Group – Terms of reference.

A.1 The Worship Review and Development Group (WRGD) was set up by the Local Ministry Development Group (LMGD) in 2017. I have been unable to find, either from the files or longstanding members of the group, any terms of reference for WRGD; the initial invitation in 2017 suggested the group could look at:

1. Review and potentially revise all the orders of service.
2. Plan special services (eg Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday, Remembrance).
3. Generate ideas for new forms of worship.
4. Consider how to involve and integrate children and young people more effectively.
5. Review services.
6. Consider worship events that could be held in town (like the Walk of Witness). “Thy Kingdom Come” events are being planned for the time around Pentecost (including a prayer walk around the town and a Churches Together service with
7. Baptism at 10.30 on June 4th). [in2017]

A.2 The Group meets as needed and is chaired by the Rector; Current members are the Rector, Michael Gallagher, William Hopkinson, MaryAnne Keyes, Lois Pratt, Christine Walters and Andrew Younie. Kate makes notes of the meetings but these are not generally circulated to the PCC. WRGD has recently discussed, for example, how occasional services should be organised, publicity and timing for the Christmas services.

LMGD is no longer operational. Given that the PCC has responsibility for ‘promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical’ it would be desirable for WRGD to have a closer link with PCC, and a more closely defined remit.

A.3 It is therefore suggested that WRGD should have the following terms of reference ‘The Worship Review and Development Group (WRGD) will advise the Rector, churchwardens and PCC on matters relating to Sunday and occasional services¹. Decisions on the form and content of services will be taken by the Rector in consultation with the Wardens and PCC.

Membership of the Group will be approved by the PCC.

WRGD will circulate notes of its meetings to the PCC.’

Members are asked to consider this proposal.

Cath Beech

February 2024

¹ ie Sunday and special services, but not extending to other events with an element of worship, such as awaydays and quiet days