



St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury

Minutes of Parochial Church Council - 16 November 2022

Present: Keith Hilton-Turvey (Chair)
David Houghton (Churchwarden)
Cath Beech (Churchwarden)
Andrew Beech,
Maria Dineen
Benjamin Hilton-Turvey
William Hopkinson
Ian James
Christabel Panter
Anne Scull
Peter Scull
James Smith
Diana Veasey
Peter Veasey
Will Wake

Apologies: Stephen Cheetham, Sue Cooper, Tim Keyes, Lisa-Jayne Lewis

1031. Keith Hilton-Turvey opened with Matthew 28:18-20 and 2 Corinthians 4:1-7 and prayer.

Apologies for absence

1032. Andrew Beech explained that Lisa-Jayne Lewis had resigned from the Council from 30 November having taken strong exception to the sermon preached on 6 November.

Minutes of previous meeting

1033. The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September were agreed unanimously.

1034. The minutes of the Standing Committee on 7 November were noted.

Safeguarding

1035. Annie Lindon will notify all those who need DBS checking. All DBS applications are now online.

PCC awayday

1036. The next awayday will take place on 19 November. The Ven. Derek Chedzey will facilitate proceedings.

Baptism

1037. Diana Veasey introduced a policy document proposed by the Baptism Review Group. In discussion several substantive changes were agreed. The resulting document is at Annex A. It was noted that the WRDG also had a role in reviewing the form of baptismal services, and which of those available best suits the circumstances of SMAA. James Smith proposed adopting the revised policy, seconded by Peter Scull. This was agreed with nine in favour, five abstentions and none against.

Communications

1038. Following a request from James Smith it was agreed that the church should have a directory of church officers and members. To comply with data protection law individuals would need to consent to their details being included within the directory, and the electronic directory should be located on the website behind a password protected log-in facility. It was acknowledged that some church members do not use computers, and they will need to be catered for. This matter will be considered by the Communications Review Group, who will invite James Smith to their next meeting.

Action: William Hopkinson

Youth work

1039. Zoe Smith continues in her work to establish a Christian Union at John Masefield School. This needs prayer support.

Pew sheet

1040. Lisa-Jayne Lewis had produced a template for a revised pew sheet, and readings insert. This was welcomed as an improvement. PCC members were asked to consider the layout and content (and colour) as to feed comments to William Hopkinson and Keith Hilton-Turvey. Lisa-Jayne Lewis was thanked for her efforts.

Action: All PCC members

Liturgical Plan

1041. The Liturgical Plan had been recirculated (Annex B), taking account of comments made by members following the previous meeting (see paragraph 1021). Maria Dineen was thanked for her efforts in producing the revised document. The revised document was adopted with ten votes in favour, two against and two abstentions. After the vote William Hopkinson posed three questions about the interpretation of the Plan to Keith Hilton-Turvey, none of which were capable of being answered briefly.

Church office

1042. David Houghton presented a paper recommending the closure of the church office from the end of March 2023. To this end, Sarah Williams would need to be given notice of redundancy by the end of January 2023. He hoped that volunteers to carry out the tasks currently undertaken by Sarah would be able to work in parallel from the end of January onwards. Concern was expressed that sufficient volunteers might not be found.

1043. David proposed the closure of the office, subject to a review of costings in early January. This was seconded by James Smith. The proposal was agreed with ten votes in favour, one against and three abstentions. Members of the PCC were asked to keep the decision confidential for the time being.

Action: David Houghton

Reordering

1044. William Hopkinson presented three papers from the Buildings Working Group. Members were asked to send any comments on these to William Hopkinson at g.w.hopkinson@btinternet.com and to Keith Hilton-Turvey at smaaalsje@btinternet.com.

Finance

1045. In the absence of Stephen Cheetham, who had Covid, Cath Beech presented the finance report. It was proposed that the Parish Share be reduced to £45,400 (note this is lower than the figure agreed by the Standing Committee), as expenditure on energy costs was increasing by such a large amount. Stephen had already pre-warned the diocese that such a decision would have to be taken. Cath Beech proposed the reduction, seconded by Ian James, which was agreed with eight votes in favour and four abstentions. Keith Hilton-Turvey asked all PCC members to pray about the church's financial situation.

Action: Stephen Cheetham/All PCC members

1046. It was agreed that there was insufficient time to consult the congregation this year on which charities to support. Ian James and Cath Beech will liaise on an appropriate list based on last year's. Members were told that, by law, the church may only support charities with objectives broadly similar to those of the church. The charitable donations policy is at Annex C.

1047. Andrew Beech proposed, seconded by James Smith, that the church heating be operated only two hours in advance of an event (including services) and for the duration of the event. This would save four hours heating per day compared with previous practice. Clevedon Organs had indicated that this regime should not damage the organ. It was asked whether the piano might need retuning more often. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

Action: Andrew Beech

1048. Andrew Beech proposed, seconded by James Smith, that the charges for heating the church be increased to £50/hour for commercial events, plus weddings and funerals and £40/hour for other events, such as use by community groups. The churchwardens

would have discretion to reduce these charges in specific cases. Use by church groups and schools would continue to be free. This was to reflect substantially increased energy costs. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

Action: David Houghton

Fabric

1049. The cost of replacing the flash banding in the roof valleys was not yet known. In any event the work could not take place until late Spring 2023.

1050. The faculty having been received, the replacement projector and screen would be fitted from 16-19 January 2023. Additional quotes were awaited for the Chapter House lighting, but it was likely that the project could be on or under budget. Once received, Andrew Beech will circulate quotes received and the budgeted proposal, with a recommendation as to which offer to accept.

Action: Andrew Beech

Funerary monuments

1051. Andrew Beech reported that the Standing Committee had agreed to a quote of £457 from Mareva Conservation of Birmingham to draw up detailed schedules for the refurbishment of the Skinner monument in the chancel and the Lucy memorial in St Anne's chapel.

Greverade altarpiece

1052. It was agreed that the Greverade altarpiece should be sited on the altar in St Anne's chapel, mounted in such a way that it could easily be moved should the need arise. Ian James proposed that the Friends be asked to restore the altarpiece. This was agreed with nine votes in favour and three abstentions.

St Katherine's

1053. David Houghton stated that a new solicitor is being sought, one who has greater knowledge of leasing issues.

Warm spaces

1054. Cath Beech reported that SMAA is working to staff a warm space on Saturday mornings at the Baptist church. Hot drinks, company and a chat would be provided. The project was already fully funded, but additional volunteers to help out were sought. The provision of warm spaces is being co-ordinated by Herefordshire Council through LEAF.

Next meeting

1055. It was agreed that in 2023 the PCC would meet on 2 February, 15 March, 17 May, 19 July, 20 September and 15 November. The next meeting will be in St Katherine's Hall at 7.15pm on Thursday 2 February 2023.

The meeting closed at 9.51.

BAPTISM POLICY

A.1 The church recognises that baptism, also known as christening, marks the start of a journey of faith.

A.2 Throughout the application of our baptism policy we will follow C of E Safeguarding Policy and seek to achieve best practice including:

- a) The PCC will establish and maintain a Baptism Support Group (BSG) drawn from the PCC and the wider congregation;
- b) All members of the BSG and all those approved for home visiting will be expected to complete Safeguarding Level 1 as a minimum requirement of involvement on behalf of the church;
- c) All members of the BSG and those approved for home visiting must be DBS checked in advance of making any home visits.

A.3 To support applicants and their families in baptism we will follow the SMAA Baptism Pathway (see separate document).

A.4 The church will underpin its whole baptismal practice with prayer; the BSG will keep relevant people e.g. Sunday intercessors and Pew Sheet originators, informed in a timely way.

A.5 We will give a warm, joyful welcome to all individuals and families enquiring about baptism.

A.6 We will be sensitive to and supportive of all enquirers with their various needs, e.g. physical, mental, social, and/or spiritual.

A.7 We will keep our baptism information up to date on all our publications e.g. social media, website, and hard-copy: service sheets, leaflets, pew sheet.

A.8 The church will encourage baptismal enquirers. BSG will establish and maintain on-going contact with them, and lead the follow-up and nurture of those newly baptised.

A.9 BSG will consider which form of service is best for each baptismal applicant and family¹. The main service of the day will host baptisms, as recommended by the C of E. In exceptional circumstances alternative arrangements can be provided.

A.10 The PCC will review the impact and effectiveness of this policy every 24 months.

¹ This may include Morning Service with Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child, as appropriate.

ANNEX B

LITURGICAL PLAN

B.1 The Liturgical Plan (LP) is part of the wider Conservation Management Plan (CMP). The LP will become a chapter of this.

B.2 The primary purpose of the LP is to set down, in general terms, how the church building is, and will be, used liturgically (i.e., for worship) and communally (i.e., for the benefit of the local community). It is not a binding document, and the intention is that it will remain under regular review and refinement, as the needs of the church and the local community evolve, as all communities do.

Mission

B.3 Ledbury has a population of about 10,500 which is set to increase significantly. The purpose of St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury (SMAA) is to serve as the parish church. It is the sole Anglican church in Ledbury. Therefore, it is to:

- Be a focus for the church's ministry to the whole town;
- Be a place where prayer and worship are offered, for individuals, for the church, the town, and the world;
- Preach the gospel of Christ, nurture Christian faith and Christian learning in collaboration with other churches and traditions;
- Be a place where people meet Jesus Christ;
- Extend hospitality to pilgrims and visitors of every kind, from all places;
- Demonstrate the concern of Christ for the poor;
- Engage with, and minister to, the town, its people, its corporate life, its businesses, organisations, and institutions;
- Engage in the complexities of contemporary society and culture and to explore spiritual values with all people of goodwill, while providing a clear Christian witness and message;
- Provide and facilitate, in worship and elsewhere, theological instruction within the Anglican tradition;
- Make worship as accessible as possible, appropriate to the context and its specific aims;
- Offer itself and its facilities as a significant contribution to the needs of the town, cultural, educational and for recreational matters.

These purposes are summed up in SMAA's mission statement: Worshipping God, Following Jesus, Sharing His Love.

The Building

B.4 SMAA is a major parish church in England and one of the most important early mediaeval churches in Herefordshire. Of exceptional significance its with complex architectural, archaeological, and art and history. These are recognised in its Grade I listing. The general layout (except for the Victorian pews) reflects medieval liturgical requirements, reinforced by the last major restoration, circa 1895 which had in mind Tractarian (what we think of now as High-Church or Anglo-Catholic) worship. There are two major representations of the Last Supper, one, a reproduction under the east window, the other an original 16th century work at the west end of the north aisle.

B.5 The church can seat 400 people. The main Sunday services attracted around 100 people prior to the 2020 pandemic. Since pandemic restrictions have been lifted (2022) numbers are gradually increasing and at the time of writing are around 80. In addition, a number of people continue to participate via our live stream and later video recording. This group is both local and further afield. Christingle (which usually has a congregation of around 550) fills the church, as can occasional large funerals and weddings. Recent studies have demonstrated that in several respects SMAA has significant drawbacks for modern worship, not least in catering for those who are impaired in mobility, sight, or hearing. The audio-visual system and lighting need improvement (with some great improvements made in the chancel during 2021). Changes in floor levels around the church pose a range of access challenges. Schemes are under investigation to address the problems and it is hoped to remedy them as opportunity and resources allow.

Use of the Building

B.6 Those attending services, and visitors to SMAA, enter and leave the building by the step free north porch. Welcomers stand at the west end between the north aisle and the nave. The churchwardens and others also congregate here. This can sometimes create a bottleneck.

B.7 The west door is used primarily for the exit of newly married couples and the congregation after weddings. For the Good Friday march, and for the annual civic service and the Remembrance Sunday service the west door is also used. The experimental opening of these doors for Sunday services in 2020, 2021 and 2022 (when weather permitted) allowed more light into the church and made services more visible and accessible to passers-by.

B.8 Two other doors, one in St Anne's Chapel and the other in the Chapter House, are unlocked and signposted during each service for emergency evacuation. The nave altar-table is used for all main services. Holy Communion is administered from two stations; the communion rail in front of the high altar and the steps of Trinity (a place at the east end of the north aisle, adjacent to the clergy vestry).

B.9 Communicants at Trinity receive in both kinds through intinction (wafers dipped part way in a single chalice and placed on people's flat hands). People are invited to sanitise their hands. Those wishing to receive communion in both kinds using the common cup do so at the communion rail. Communion is taken to the pews as people need and request. Blessings are given to those who request. An open invitation for this is given at all communion services.

B.10 Prior to the pandemic the chancel was in principle used for evening services on Sundays and for Compline on certain weekdays. Compline services were also regularly held in St Anne's Chapel. It is also used for private prayer and for group prayer meetings on Thursdays and Fridays and is where prayer ministry is offered. The aumbry, where the blessed sacrament may be reserved, is in the sanctuary of the chapel. For some this is an important focus for prayer. The book of remembrance is also kept in St Anne's Chapel. Nearby there is also facility for individuals to light votive candles.

B.11 The Chapter House was used by Young Church for their own session during the 10:00 service on Sundays. The aim is for this to resume. Now, it is sometimes used for administrative meetings and for a monthly outreach 'Coffee Stop'. This space has sizable

potential for more use, and it is already used regularly by a range of community groups e.g., the U3A Recorder Consort, an art group, and a hand chimes group.

B.12 There is a small meeting room, the choir vestry, which was, and is, used weekly on Thursday mornings for prayer. This is an ecumenical prayer meeting. The Standing Committee uses the choir vestry bimonthly when it chooses not to meet elsewhere. It is also used from time to time by the Fabric Sub-Committee, the offering counters, the Worship Review Development Group and for music planning. Ad hoc meetings also take place. A challenge with this space, is its use as a thoroughfare for people needing to use the lavatories.

B.13 The preacher, crucifer and one or two supporters may process from the vestry, along the north aisle to the front of the nave via the central aisle at the start of each 10 am service and process westwards down the nave to the end. The celebrant enters the chancel from the clergy vestry and walks down the chancel to the nave altar-table.

B.14 Clergy stand at the west end of the north aisle to speak to congregants at the end of 8am and 10am services. It is notable that prior to the pandemic the number of servers and sacristans was small and diminishing. Volunteers have diminished further. Unless this can be remedied it is predictable that there will be further diminution in processional aspects of regular worship.

B.15 Sometimes the Gospel procession takes place westward down the nave aisle to a place in the centre of the nave, but that depends on both the ability and desire of those reading the gospel, reflecting the variety of expressions within the congregation.

B.16 As regards other participation by the laity in main services, there are a range of opportunities. These include acting as welcomers, undertaking to read from the bible at services, intercession (one intercessor) and for the administration of the Eucharist. From time to time in morning worship services there is congregational involvement in leading, preaching and in testimony and this is being developed.

B.17 A Licensed Lay Minister (Lay Reader) leads morning worship and evensong and preaches monthly. A second lay reader leads and preaches on a more *ad hoc* basis, according to availability.

Worship

B.18 The liturgical provision of SMAA is work in progress. In the twentieth century it has been rooted in the Eucharist with at various times, including the full use of vestments and a robed choir, This which ceased shortly after 2000 when St Michael's singers took over, becoming a non-robed choir. This disbanded about 2008.

B.19 Over recent decades worship has become less high church. In the last few years, following the 2013 Mission Action Plan (MAP) decision, the main service on the second Sunday of the month is now Morning Worship. During Parish Communion services ministers leading service are free to robe and vest as they wish. This means that full vestments are worn less frequently, reflecting the mix of the church community.

B.20 Musical tastes amongst the congregation range from traditional to contemporary. Following the appointment, in September 2020, of a new Director of Music a choir sings on the second and fourth Sunday mornings. Since September 2021 choral evensong takes

place on the third Sunday. The Director of Music may change and develop this and other musical aspects of worship.

B.21 In October 2022, a pilot of an evening communion service commenced. This will be evaluated after six services.

B.22 Also beginning in October 2022, on the second Sunday of the month morning worship service is being organised and delivered for an experimental period by a team of lay members of the congregation.

Note: The make-up of the congregation contains a wide spectrum of theology and practice. It is impossible to meet all preferences the whole time. Generosity of spirit is necessary. SMAA aspires to be an Anglican parish church, ready always to welcome and serve all people of the parish with the nourishment of scriptural truth and the Holy Spirit.

B.23 The church is open to all for worship and welcomes a range of civic services and celebrations. The principal service is at 10am, with a weekly 8am BCP Communion service.

Note: Pre-covid a monthly evening communion service on the second Sunday and two evensong services which were usually BCP on the first and third Sundays. Post covid, evening service times have been moved to 5:30pm throughout the year.

B.24 The need for contemplative services is recognised and will be reviewed. Prior to the pandemic there were twice monthly night prayer or Compline services on Wednesday evenings.

B.25 On Thursdays there are two ecumenical meetings for prayer at 7am and 12pm. There is also a said Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Communion Service held in St. Katherine's Chapel at 10:30am on Friday mornings.

B.26 For a time, the Pastoral Group provided an additional ministry of a listening ear in church for those who sought support and appreciated someone to pray with them; this was ended because of a diminishing take-up. Townsfolk, visitors, and others continue to value coming into church to pray and appreciate lighting a votive candle or adding a prayer to the prayer tree which is no longer in situ. SMAA will consider how it can meet future needs for individual prayer and reflection. Consideration of the development of corporate prayer is also required.

Liturgical policies

B.27 These are:

- a) to provide Anglican services and worship;
- b) for worship to feed, nurture and attract Christian disciples, doubters, explorers, the unchurched, children and young people and visitors;
- c) for worship to be as accessible as possible, spiritually, physically and emotionally;
- d) to maintain and develop the ministry of prayer (private and communal) for the Church and the world, globally and locally;
- e) to continue the ecumenical services, which currently take place in January (service of Christian Unity) Easter (Good Friday walk of witness and worship in the town), Pentecost and Harvest (which takes place on the second Sunday of October);

- f) to continue to provide civic services throughout the year, particularly the Civic Service (usually on the first Sunday of October), the Town Carol Service (on the second Sunday of December – third Sunday of Advent) and others as they arise (e.g.: Service of Commemoration for Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth);
- g) to offer the Occasional Offices (such as Thanksgivings for Children, Baptisms, Weddings, Thanksgivings after civil marriages, Renewal of Marriage Vows, Funerals and Memorials) to the town and to those with a demonstrable link to the parish, following traditional Anglican teaching and canons;
- h) to continue to continue developing our range of services and liturgy in accordance with paragraph B.3 above;
- i) to continue to maintain and develop a variety of occasional services (e.g., Christingle, Candlemas Candle Service, All Souls: remembering those we have loved and lost, Remembrance Sunday and Light Up a Life). Also, for organisations. (e.g., the local Maritime Cadet Corps Trafalgar Day Service);
- j) to continue to provide live and online services efficiently;
- k) to develop live streaming facilities for funerals and weddings, regular services and occasional services; civic, communal, and personal;
- l) to aspire to offer worship of the highest possible standard to the glory of God, using a range of the Church's liturgical heritage and taking into consideration the various traditions of the parish church's membership;
- m) to host services for local primary and secondary schools and other local organisations (e.g. scouts, Maritime Cadets, RBL, local council);
- n) to offer sacred Christian space in response to local or national events.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS POLICY

- C.1** a) A review of PCC donations shall take place not less than once in each 2 years, carried out by small group of approx. 5 -7 members;
- b) The PCC shall make an (upwards only) allocation comprising not less than 10% of congregation giving to the General Fund before gift aid each year;
- c) The amount donated by St Michael's should take into account funds raised by church sponsored activities (as opposed to private initiatives) such as special collections (on a proportionate basis where other churches may be involved) with the exception of the annual CMS garden party where the established practice is that the amount raised is in addition to church giving;
- d) In addition to the church promoting support of the Anglican church in Mtwara via lent lunches, the church should actively promote similar events for some of the other charities supported via the PCC donations and individual church members.

Basis of review of intended recipients

C.2

- Number of recipients to take account of the cost of processing small donations and practical effect of sum involved;
- The broad allocation to be 40% to overseas charities, 30% to general UK charities, 30% to charities supporting activities in and around the Ledbury area;
- Preference for charities that follow biblical principles of giving to or supporting the poor and needy of society, and those that could broaden the base of our churches in Ledbury and promote the gospel to the local community, motivated by love of our neighbour;
- Identify where greatest value for money can be achieved, with an emphasis on accountability and efficient use of resources;
- Preference for charities where individual in the church can build up a relationship and we can obtain feedback on projects undertaken;
- To give to a range of charities, avoiding duplication of objectives.