

St Matthew's Church Harwell

Minutes of the Annual Meetings held on Tuesday 31st March at 7.45 p.m. in St Matthew's Church Hall

The meetings were chaired by Rev Chris Stott and recorded by Martin Speed.

The attendance was 35.

Apologies were received from Peter Cox, Anne Gill, Heather House, Vicky Macarthur, Jim and Wendy Sinclair, and Stephen and Helen Tunstall.

The meeting opened with the singing of the hymn "Thanks be to God". Kate Evans then read verses from 1 Ephesians starting at verse 15.

Annual Parochial Meeting

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd April 2008 were distributed. It was proposed by Frances Taylor that these should be accepted as a correct record. This was seconded by Norman Ponting and unanimously agreed. The minutes were duly signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

Election of Churchwardens

On behalf of everyone, Chris thanked Tim Roberts and Allan Macarthur for their continual hard work behind the scenes as churchwardens over the last year.

In advance of the meeting Alan Macarthur and Tim Roberts were nominated and seconded in writing to be elected as churchwardens for the next year. There were no other nominations. They were elected unanimously.

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: Chris Stott

Secretary:

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd April 2008 were distributed. Grace Mein proposed that these should be signed as a correct record of the meeting. This was seconded by Mel Gibson and unanimously agreed. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Matters Arising

No matters arising from the minutes were raised.

Election of PCC Members

Chris thanked the PCC for their service over the last year. Eleven nominations had been received in advance for the twelve available posts. No further nominations were forthcoming. The following were elected unanimously:

Sid Gale	Tony Hughes	Frances Taylor
Mel Gibson	Victoria Luker	Matt Webb
Gordon Gill	Vicky Macarthur	Jane Woolley
Clive House	Roz Shipp	

Election of Sidesmen

Allan Macarthur thanked all who had served as sidesmen over the past year for making a very important contribution to the services. He reminded everyone that new recruits would always be welcome. Allan proposed the following to serve for the coming year. These were seconded by Jim Mein and elected unanimously.

Mary Hanley	Anne and Graham Cox	David Pyke
Liz Roberts	Geoff Jenkinson	Jim and Wendy Sinclair
Gill Gay	Mark Hillier	Roz Shipp
Elizabeth Gill	Pat Connolly	Liz Hill
Jean and Tony Twigger	Ryan Davies	Roy and Ruth Slatter
Betty and Peter McNiven	Betty Pyke	Mike Pepper

(It was noted by Roy Slatter that the way the secretary had recorded married couples in the list was not consistent and it has now been changed to record married couples in alphabetical order.)

Church Annual Report

The Annual Report, adopted by the PCC at its last meeting and signed by Chris Stott as chairman, had been distributed. It summarised the purpose of the PCC, gave the list of members, explained the use of subcommittees, recorded the church membership and attendance figures, reviewed the business considered by the PCC, and summarised the financial position. A brief presentation on this was given by the co-opted PCC secretary.

Following this, there was one question: to ask whether the PCC's view (recorded in the 'SWOT' analysis) of 'compartmentalisation' being a weakness of the church could also be seen as 'specialisation' and a strength of the church. The secretary agreed with this and noted that the PCC had acknowledged the active involvement of so many members as a strength of the church.

Financial Report

The financial report was made by the Treasurer, Clive House.

The Financial Statement for the year ended 31 December 2008 had been adopted by the PCC at its last meeting, and was presented along with the statement of the appointed Independent Examiner, Alison Mignanelli.

Clive based his comments on the 'simple' summary of receipts and payments provided by Elizabeth Gill to accompany the full report. He reported that the Church had a small deficit overall for the year – which he interpreted as effectively 'breaking even'. This he said was a very good outcome given that the budget had been set with the expectation of a substantial deficit. He thanked everyone for their contributions over the year. He was also pleased to report that mission and local charity giving had been re-established to its 'traditional' proportion of income, at 15%. He also drew attention to the fact that some funds had been transferred to a restricted fund at the end of the year to be used for work on the organ blower box.

Clive said thank you to Elizabeth Gill as bookkeeper. He said that she made his job as treasurer an easy one to fulfil. He also thanked Alison Mignanelli for acting as Independent Examiner for the accounts.

Questions on the accounts were invited. Clive was asked whether the current financial situation would affect the accounts – and he responded that interest on our funds would be reduced and therefore a prudent year was needed.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

Chris thanked Clive for his hard work over the year.

Clive and Chris reported that Alison Mignanelli was prepared to act as independent examiner for a further year. Her appointment was proposed by Mike Pepper, seconded by Frances Taylor and unanimously accepted by the meeting.

Report on Fabric and Ornaments

A written report had been distributed in the booklet with the annual report, and highlights from this were presented by Tim Roberts.

He reported that the church property is in a good state of repair and that the log books are up to date and available for inspection.

He said that this had been a very low-key year after all the work on the tower project. However, he said that much work had still gone into keeping the buildings in good repair and making them welcoming. He mentioned the work done on the glass of the entrance doors, work on guttering and tiling and the 'new style' working days (which concentrated on smaller scale tasks that it was hoped were less daunting to new contributors to the work-effort.)

He thanked everyone who contributed to making the buildings welcoming and well-maintained, particularly mentioning:

- The buildings committee
- The cleaners
- The flower arrangers
- Those who looked after the church linen

He specially thanked Tony Hughes for leading the buildings committee.

He also thanked Wendy for her work looking after the Church Hall.

Alan acknowledged the scale of the work that had been achieved in completing the Church Tower project and thanked all those who had been involved, especially Tony Hughes, Roz Ship, Gordon Gill and Tim Roberts.

There were no questions about this report.

Electoral Roll Report

Mike Pepper, the electoral roll officer, reported that there had been six leavers and six joiners, and so the roll remains at 144, the same number as last year. (He thanked Jim Sinclair for setting up the original spreadsheets that made this reporting easy to maintain.)

Deanery Synod Report

The Deanery Synod report was presented by Georgina Greer, one of the two Deanery Synod representatives. Georgina reported that there had been four meetings: in March, June, September, and November.

She reported that the March meeting had dealt with accounts and the parish share and Ladygrove becoming a church in its own right, the June meeting had dealt with elections (including appointing Naomi Gibson as secretary), the September meeting had adopted a new format for meetings,

including presentations from two churches as a focus for each meeting, and dealt with the Deanery prayer diary and in November the meeting had re-established the pastoral committee.

Child Protection Report

As child protection officer for the parish, Georgina Greer reported that child protection continued to be regarded as very important and that standards of checking were being maintained. She reported that no new CRB checks had been undertaken in Harwell in the year. She reported that it had now been established by the church that the checks would be re-done every five years and so she would soon be contacting people who had checks done over five years ago for re-checking.

Questions were invited. Georgina was asked who paid for the checks, and she reported that the parish did so (though this was subsidised by the Diocese.) There was a discussion of whether checks were transferrable, and Georgina said that it was likely that a separate check would be needed for each organisation a person might work with. The question was raised as to whether other churches in the same diocese could accept checks made by Harwell – and Georgina said she was not sure but would look into this.

Reports from Selected Organisations

Gill Gay reported on the work of the *Evergreens group*. She said that they met on the third Thursday of every month with around 40 of their 80 members attending each meeting. Meetings usually included a talk by a visiting speaker. There were normally 3 outings a year. She reported that the accounts were in good order. She reported that she had introduced a printed programme this year. She thanked the committee members and those who organised the refreshments at meetings for all their hard work.

Kate Evans gave a report on the work of the *worship group*. She reported that the group had started when Chris was away and Jean was ill as a way of sharing the organisation of worship among those who were available to lead services – talking through the themes and selecting hymns. She said the focus in more recent times had been more on worship for all ages and aiming to create memorable special services. The group used the 'Light for Lectionary' publication from Scripture Union as a resource for this. Kate ended her report with some positive statistics drawn from the 2007 survey of worshippers – but (illustrating the difficulty of the worship group's job) she also drew attention to the diversity of the requests to 'do more of' from that same survey. Kate was asked who it was who chose the hymns or songs for a service and she said it was the leader of the service (in consultation with whoever was preaching.)

Chris thanked Kate for her work with the worship group.

Chris also took the opportunity to mention the Parish Portfolio which is being compiled by Hazel King as part of the training for ministry that Pam Rolls was undertaking. He said that it will include a community audit survey.

The Rector's Remarks

Chris opened his remarks by saying that it had not been an easy year. He drew a parallel with the book of Habakkuk, who he said prayed and prophesied in a time of crisis. Like him Chris said we might be feeling bewilderment – upset that God's followers do not get preferential treatment. Chris also referred to difficult context in which the early church prospered. At this time he said we need to serve as others have done following Paul's exhortation to 'Stand firm.'

Chris thanked the ministry team, particularly Kate Evans, who was described as always thoughtful, helpful and creative. (He acknowledged the amount of work she did – recalling a recent conversation in which Kate had felt she had spent all week working on services.)

He also thanked Bruce, Steve, Joan and Pam for their contributions.

He thanked Naomi for her 6 year contribution to the administration of the church, and welcomed Carolyn Vickers as she takes over the role of administrator.

Chris welcomed the success of the recent Alpha course. He noted that the Didcot development will require the churches in Didcot to work more together.

He referred to his paper on church renewal and how it aimed to find ways of better bridging the gap between the church and other aspects of culture, and may follow a number of different threads. He said he would welcome any suggestions and that they could be made to him, sent in written form, or made to any member of the PCC.

He said that our church shows many signs of God's blessing, and though we might feel we were not being effective enough in passing the message on we must trust God is working through us, and in the words of Paul, "let us fix our eyes on Jesus" and "press on toward the goal to win the prize".

Other Business

Gordon Gill noted that one person had been missed from those who had been thanked for their work in the last year, and on behalf of everyone he thanked Chris for all he has done.

Close

Joan closed the meeting in prayer at 9:05 pm.

Signed as a true record:

Chairman: Chris Stott

Secretary: