

Minutes of a Meeting of Harwell PCC held on Tuesday 12 July at 7.45pm in Harwell Church Extension

Present

Jean Barton	Clive House	Frances Taylor
Cathy Convery	Tim Roberts (part)	Marilyn Thomas
Kate Evans	Wendy Sinclair	Rob Thomas
Sid Gale	Ruth Slatter	Steve Tunstall
Madeleine Gibson	Martin Speed (Secretary)	Tony Ullmer
	Chris Stott (Chair)	

1. Opening

Chris opened the meeting with a reading from Mathew 10, followed by reflection and prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Georgina Greer and Clive Silver.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on Tuesday 10th May 2005 were signed as a correct record.

4. Matters arising

- a) **Missions display board:** Ruth reported an apology from Allan McArthur that he had been unable to make more progress, and that he would endeavour to complete the work over the summer, but that he would welcome help if someone with a flair for design were to offer.

Action: Ruth to continue to follow up with Allan.

- b) **GB Tree in the churchyard:** Ruth reported that the planting could not take place until the autumn.

Action: Ruth to report progress.

- c) **Church cleaning co-ordinator:** Chris reported that Debbie had offered to continue in this role. The secretary was instructed to send a letter of thanks. Other related issues were discussed: (i) the potential fire risk from storing cleaning materials under the stairs was talked through and though it was decided that they did not pose a serious risk, it was noted that an alternative cupboard may be available in the new kitchen, and (ii) it was noted that the new location for the key was more appropriate.

Action: Martin to write letter of thanks to Debbie.

- d) **Church weekend:** Steve suggested a venue near Stratford and was tasked with finding more details.

Action: Steve to obtain more information about the venue he suggested.

- e) **Alpha:** a taster evening will be held on Wednesday September 4th. A decision on whether to run a morning or evening course will be decided on the basis of the response to the taster evening.
- f) **Missions information.** E-mails following the circulation of information on the missions we support (following the funding discussions at the last meeting) made three suggestions:
 - i) That information is included in the newsletter. This has been done.
 - ii) That the new missions board will have this information. (It was reported that this was planned.)
 - iii) That a missions and charities card sale is organised before Christmas. Cathy volunteered to organise this.

Action: **Cathy** to organise the card sale.

- g) **Authorisation to preach:** Marilyn reported that she would like to be put forward for this, and the PCC gave their enthusiastic endorsement and support.

5. Financial report

Clive H distributed a written report.

Income is slightly better than budgeted at this 'half way' stage. Expenditure appears less than budgeted but it was noted that some annual bills fall in the second half of the year. Overall Clive predicts that we will have a slightly lesser deficit than the budget anticipated. Regular giving and recovered tax continue above budget, but loose alms to be down.

6. Brainstorm on the state of our finances

The following key points were noted during the discussion:

- Investigate making savings, for example undertaking an energy audit
- Challenge people with greater resources to give more
- Raise awareness of specific needs the church has (such as the folding machine)
- Follow the 'trio' approach adopted elsewhere and provide a 'non-pushy' leaflet on giving that suggests levels of contribution for different earning bands.
- Pray for money – the Lord will provide
- Provide more (and simpler) information about how to give:
 - Provide standing order forms needing just bank details and a signature
 - Provide advice about how to reclaim tax on donations
 - Interview someone at the start of a service about these practical issues
- Ensure everything we do is sensitive and not putting undue pressure on those who may find greater giving difficult (such as the elderly and young families).
- Making use of appropriate biblical teaching (The illustration of the 'Widow's coin' being specifically mentioned)

- Approach businesses – especially regarding equipment that might be donated.

7. Christmas lunch proposal

Tim put forward a proposal for the organisation of a Christmas lunch for those in the village who would otherwise be alone at Christmas (as outlined in his paper) – this would be striking demonstration of ‘sharing life at the heart of the community’.

There was support for the idea in principle, but a number of practical problems were noted: the difficulty of those with young families being able to help; the limited catering capacity of the Church Hall (the Village Hall was suggested as an alternative); the difficulty of providing (sober!) drivers to ferry people to and fro (and for those based in Didcot to get back home.) An alternative of arranging for those who would be on their own to join family meals was suggested.

Action: *Tim* to ‘take soundings’ to gain a better idea of the level of support available.

8. Confirmations

The issue of when confirmation services should be held was raised by Cathy, who thought that they would be more appropriately held in the morning so that the whole regular congregation could attend. While there was support for the principle of people being confirmed in their own church at a ‘regular’ service, Chris explained that the Bishop encourages only two confirmation services a year in a deanery. This means that churches have to ‘share’ services. A morning service would therefore mean clergy being absent from their own church to attend the confirmation. Evening services are held to avoid this problem.

9. Buildings report

The buildings report from Tony Hughes was discussed. The key issues were:

- The disabled toilet and new kitchen project starts next Monday, and this would result in only one toilet and no coffee making facilities until the work was finished.
- A gap still exists between expected funding and the cost, though it is now under the £5,000 that was underwritten by Church funds. Chris reported a grant of £300 from AEA, and that an application was to be made to the central church fund. Clive H reported that it was now expected that the area was part of the listed building and would therefore be exempt from VAT.
- Cathy suggested that the pews in storage could be sold via e-bay. She was tasked to take this idea up with Tony.

Action: *Cathy* to progress an e-bay sale of pew with Tony.

- The suggestion of approaching the feast committee for funds was discussed. Tony Hughes’ reservations about this were noted – particularly the issue of not diluting the ‘service’ aspect of undertaking the feast pig roast without looking for any reward. It was decided that a request would be made before the deadline, but that the application would be withdrawn if the funding gap was made up before the committee met to discuss the application.

Action: *Chris* to write a note making the application.

Action: *Sid* to pass the application note to the committee, and to withdraw it if the funding gap is closed prior to the meeting to discuss applications.

10. Hymn books

Jean provided a paper reporting that the decision of the PCC to replace hymn books with specially printed hymn sheets each week was stalled because of the need to buy a folding machine to cope with the increased workload.

Resolution	That the folding machine specified in Jean's paper be purchased				
Moved	Steve Tunstall	Seconded	MarilynThomas	Passed	

11. Future Dates

14 September	Alpha Taster evening in Church Hall
21 July	Harwell Young Singers Concert (Collection in aid of the disabled toilet and kitchen works)
18 – 25 July	24/7 Prayer Movement – group prayer in Northbourne Centre (near Sainsbury's) in Didcot.
22 – 24 July	Soul in Didcot
8 – 10 and 15 – 17 August	Landlubbers: Harwell Holiday Club
21 August	Gideons Speaking
7 September	Start of the Bible Studies course (17 students now signed up)
17 September	Songs of Faith concert: Bob Eagle (Harwell Church)
2 October	Harvest festival
8 October	Voices for Hospices Concert: (Harwell Church)
21 – 23 October	Visit of David and Heather Sharland

12. Other Business

- a) **Youth Sleepover in the church:** it was noted that this had gone very well and was well reported in the paper.
- b) Cathy alerted the PCC to the forthcoming '**24/7**' prayer event in Didcot. This was a group prayer taking place in the Northbourne centre near Sainsbury's with people signing up for time 'slots' to join the prayer between the 18th and 25th of July. St Matthews does not have a particular slot but our participation would be welcomed.

Action: **Cathy** was asked to discuss this with the prayer co-ordinator.

- c) **Church hall cleaning:** Wendy led a discussion of the arrangement for the cleaning of the Church Hall. It was agreed that a 'clip board check list' be left in the hall so that cleaning is recorded when it is done. It was also agreed that cleaning be suspended over the summer holiday whilst no groups are meeting in the hall, and that arrangements are reviewed after that.

Action: **Wendy** to introduce the check sheet.

13. Close

The meeting closed with prayer at 9:55pm.

14. Next Meeting

Tuesday 27 September at 7.45 pm in the Church Extension.

..... Chris Stott, chairman

..... Martin Speed, secretary

PAPERS

- PCC05M3 Minutes of previous meeting
- PCCP-M4-01 Christmas lunch proposal
- PCCP-M4-02 Copy of e-mail comments on missions publicity
- PCCP-M4-03 Buildings Report
- PCCP-M4-04 Paper on Hymn books