



Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council Monday 30th November 2020 at 19.00 by Zoom

In the Chair and Zoom host: Joan Ridgway

Secretary: Jill Mather

Present: Caroline Adams (CA), Anita Atherton (AA), Tim Bayton (TB), Susan Coombs (SC), Stuart Macwilliam (SM), Rachel Martindill (RM), Jill Mather (JM), Charlotte Payne (CP), Mike Payne (MGP), Marilyn Pegg (MP), Pat Read (PR), Joan Ridgway (JR) Nigel Ridgway (NR), Cherie Snell (CS), Fr Steve Turner (Fr S), Jim Weeks (JW), Nigel Williams (NW)

Fr Henry Pryse (Fr H) observing

Fr H opened the meeting with prayer on St Andrew's Day, thanking everyone for all the work they had been doing during his leave of absence and reminding us that St Andrew was the great encourager and enabler of others in the gospels, something he saw in the PCC members.

1. Apologies were received from Mark Davie (MD), Anne Killingback (AK)

2. Correspondence

The ecumenical group, Christians Together Across Exeter (CTaX), had written to invite St James' to appoint a representative to serve on its executive committee. TB had expressed a willingness to represent us (for a set term of office) and it was agreed that he be appointed if no-one else had expressed an interest by the end of the week, 04.12.20.

3. The Minutes of the PCC meeting held on 05.10.20 and the notes from the Standing Committee meetings held between 05.10.20 and 30.11.20 were approved with a correction of PCC Minute 8iii to 91%, not 95%.

[Without a reduction, the common fund payments would have amounted to ~~95%~~ 91% rather than the usual 65% of our total income.]

Proposed SM, seconded PR, passed nem con.

4. Matters arising from the minutes, the notes of the Standing Committee and the notes from LYCIG sub-group meetings

i. From the PCC minutes 25.11.19

CP updated the PCC on the trial of Traidcraft coffee over Sainsbury's Fairtrade coffee on Sunday mornings. Some people had indicated the former was weaker and would cost more to achieve the same taste. In response to JW's question of how many had responded, CP said about 5 had voiced this opinion. As Traidcraft coffee includes a donation to the growers in its price, JR suggested that the church make an extra donation to the charity while continuing to use the Sainsbury's Fairtrade

coffee brand. The PCC supported this proposal, agreeing that it was most important that the money went to the growers.

On behalf of the Social Justice Group, CP and MGP asked the PCC to approve the payment to Traidcraft of the surplus raised from Sunday morning refreshments, in the light of the decision to use a supermarket brand of Fairtrade coffee to replace Traidcraft, thereby signalling and strengthening our commitment as a Fairtrade Church.

The PCC approved the payment of the outstanding surplus (proposed TB, seconded CS).

ii. **From the PCC minutes 25.11.19**

Being an Eco Church: CP requested a PCC slot to discuss the idea of St James' exploring this initiative. Fr H added there was a new team in the diocese, replacing Martyn Goss, the Social Responsibility Officer, who had retired earlier in the year. He suggested Chris Keppie might address the PCC in 2020 on this subject.

On behalf of the Social Justice Group, CP and MGP asked the PCC whether Chris Keppie might be invited to speak to the February 2021 PCC meeting. RM wondered whether it might be better to ask him to preach a sermon in a church service. MGP felt that the PCC should hear from him in the first instance and mentioned that he had indicated he had more availability to join meetings held by Zoom in the Covid period.

The PCC agreed that Chris Keppie be invited to give a brief presentation (10 minutes) to the PCC on 22.02.21 (proposed MGP, seconded CA, agreed by majority).

Action: MGP on behalf of the PCC.

iii. **From the LYCIG minutes 24.06.2020:**

Hannah Martindill had suggested the Toilet Twinning scheme in the past, as a social justice project for the children and young people. CP remembered that information about this had been passed to CA but noted that no further action had been taken. Actions: CP will ask CA what has happened to the Toilet Twinning information and discuss whether St James' children and young people could get involved with the scheme.

MGP had ordered a pack and provided the PCC with more information about the project (see file note: Social Justice Matters Arising).

CA and JM explained that the children's groups had not been meeting during the pandemic, although recently they had reconvened virtually to prepare the Nativity play. It was agreed that the Toilet Twinning initiative would be recommended to the children when they are able to meet regularly again in 2021.

5. Questions and matters arising from the Assistant Curate's report

The PCC received with thanks the report previously circulated by Fr S (see file).

There were no questions or matters arising.

6. Questions and matters arising from the Treasurer's report.

The PCC received with thanks the report previously circulated by RM and NR (see file).

- i. TB asked about the decision to pay the organists half pay during the pandemic, (paragraph 3) as they still have to attend a whole service even if they are playing fewer pieces while congregational singing is not allowed. NW asked whether this had been

discussed. NR and RM reported that they had both talked to the organists about the effect of the pandemic on church income and an amicable agreement had been reached to pay half the usual fee, with the understanding that full pay would be resumed with the return to normal services. NW requested further discussion at Standing Committee: agreed.

7. Receiving the report and recommendations from the PCC sub-group on charitable giving and confirmation of allocations to charities

The PCC received with thanks the report previously circulated by TB on behalf of the sub-group (see file).

- i. TB reminded the PCC that in the February meeting, a sub-group had been formed to consider the donations made to charities by the PCC and to draw up criteria on which to base decisions. Initial thoughts, questions and responses were circulated by e-mail over the period from May to August, before the group met in person for concluding discussions on 24.08.20.
- ii. The sub-group recommended a **limit on the number of charities** to be supported, having agreed that the present list of 17 charities was too long and that a more sensible limit on the number would be no more than 10, excluding special appeals and donations. The PCC agreed this recommendation:

Overseas: Diocese of Melanesia, St Peter's Malawi Education Trust, Tearfund, USPG
UK-based: Balloons, Hospiscare, Initiatives in Christian Education, Mothers' Union, The Compassionate Friends

- iii. There had been a lively discussion in the sub-group on deciding the **ratio of overseas to UK-based** charities. Maintaining the previous 70/30 ratio would reflect the relative wealth of the United Kingdom in comparison with other countries and was one proposed solution. A 50/50 ratio was also proposed, in consideration of the fact that sending large donations abroad seemed questionable when there were many people locally who could not afford basic essentials. A compromise of 60/40 was suggested, which would be supported by the majority of the sub-group. However, the sub-group wanted the whole PCC to vote on this decision.

Voting:

The PCC agreed, after discussion, that a compromise might be reached in these difficult times of the coronavirus pandemic.

PR proposed and RM seconded the proposal that the ratio be changed from 70/30.

Agreed by majority.

The PCC approved the compromise of a ratio of 60/40 overseas/UK charities (proposed JW, seconded CA, agreed by majority).

- iv. Within the two categories, overseas and UK-based, the sub-group recommended giving **an equal sum** to each of the charities adopted. All charities to which the PCC gives should be considered equally deserving, albeit often for different reasons. The PCC agreed this recommendation.

- v. The sub-group proposed adoption of the following **criteria** for PCC giving:
- The objectives of the charity should be in line with our objectives as a Church
 - There should be a current connection between St James' Church and the charity concerned
 - The charity should spend no more than 25% of its income on operating and fundraising
 - The cash and short-term investments held by the charity should be no greater than 50% of its annual income

The PCC accepted and approved the criteria (proposed PR, seconded CS, agreed by majority).

- vi. The PCC, having approved earlier the one-off payment to Traidcraft, considered the request from the Social Justice Group that *all* surplus funds from refreshments, raised as a result of using supermarket brands, be given to Traidcraft. TB asked whether the charity should undergo the scrutiny according to the criteria just approved by the PCC. MGP said that this was about the PCC commitment to being a Fairtrade Church and the potential loss of support to the growers arising from the decision not to use Traidcraft coffee. JM said, and CA agreed, that the decision to pass on a specific surplus to Traidcraft is quite separate from the PCC decisions about which charities to support with a portion of the money given through covenants and collections throughout the year. It was proposed that in future all surplus refreshment money be given to Traidcraft (proposed MGP, seconded JM, agreed by majority).

8. Questions and matters arising from the Churchwardens' report

The PCC received with thanks the report previously circulated by NW and NR (see file).

9. Questions and matters arising from the committee reports, including Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Fabric and Communications: CA, NR & TB

The PCC received with thanks the reports previously circulated (see file).

i. From the Communications Report

RM reported that she had had to deal with two angry complaints that *Contact* magazine had been delivered during lockdown, despite the Standing Committee decision to wait until the end of lockdown on 02.12.20. One person had asked why the magazines were being delivered in a time when he perceived the church to be closed. TB wondered whether people struggling during the pandemic might have found some of the content personally challenging this year. He also said that he had informed the volunteers that the Standing Committee had asked that they postpone their deliveries, but that he was not able to dictate when volunteers gave up their time to deliver *Contact*. SC made the point that post was being delivered throughout the lockdown and that she had already delivered her copies before the Standing Committee decision. It was recognised from

the chair that these were difficult times for many people and that it had been unpleasant for RM to take angry calls. Thanks were extended to SC for her work in coordinating the delivery packs, to TB and the communications group for editing and producing the magazine, and to all the volunteers for delivering it.

- ii. From the **Fabric Report** (point 5)
Repairs to paths: it was agreed that NR should investigate grant-giving bodies who might be able to support the repair work.

10. Any other business

NR had submitted a paper for future consideration and prayer entitled *Opportunities provided by the current crisis*. Time did not permit discussion.

11. Date and time of next meeting: 22.02.21 at 19.30

12. The Grace

The meeting closed with the Grace at 20.10.

Jill Mather
Secretary to the PCC
30.11.20