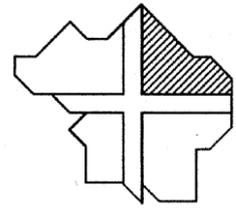


**Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP)
Minutes of the Trustees Meeting held on
Thursday, 23 February 2012 at 7.45 pm
at Great Linford, St Andrew's Church**



Document date 26.02.2012
Amended 12.03.2012

1. Opening Prayer

Revd Peter Ballantine used the Collect for Ash Wednesday to guide the thoughts of Trustees at this early stage of Lent and prayed that deliberations would promote sharing of the good news of Jesus.

2. Advance Notification of Any Other Business

Ratification of the Methodist Church resolution concerning changes to Standing Orders to clarify the meaning of the word 'Minister' in the Deed of Union.

3. PCC Meeting

The meeting convened at 7.47 pm

The following motion was proposed by Adrian Prisk and seconded by Bob Cross:

"That the Stantonbury and Willen PCC give their consent to Rev'd Christine Collinge, of St James' Church to write to The Right Reverend Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham, asking for authorization for Helen Rouse and Mary Kennedy to distribute extended communion to the sick"

Agreed Nem. Con.

Bob Cross reported that the Archdeacon's Visitation would be at the church of Ss Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell on Tuesday 15 May 2012. Whilst the 'swearing in' would be for the two elected Churchwardens, all Partnership Church Officers are invited to attend and be recognised.

The PCC meeting concluded at 7.50 pm

4. Minutes of Meeting on 1 September 2011 for approval

Mr Jim Billenness was not present at this meeting and his name should be transferred to those giving apologies. Subject to this correction it was proposed by Revd Peter Ballantine and seconded by Maggie Prisk that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting. *Agreed Nem. Con.*

5. Matters Arising

Successor for Chairman of Trustees

Mike Morris will not be standing for re-election at the ACM in April and a new chairman is being sought.

Ministerial Team Leader

Revd Andy Jowitt will stand down as Team Leader as from this meeting and Revd Peter Ballantine will assume the role.

Trustees asked that a Vote of Thanks be recorded in the Minutes to Revd Andy Jowitt for all his work during the last three years.

Lenten Programme of Accompanied Prayer

Revd Brian Howden reported that eleven pilgrims had enrolled for the course that had commenced the preceding Monday. Sessions will continue on Wednesday afternoons and Thursday evenings until Holy Week. This will make a total of 40 Partnership members who have completed the programme.

Trustees asked that thanks be recorded to Margaret Broadhurst and Margaret Moakes for their organisation of the Lenten Programme.

Evaluation of 'Christmas Cracked'

Revd Chris Howden said that the sessions had proved very successful (despite a few technical hitches) and had been particularly rewarding as a team effort. Over 250 pupils had participated. Role play by Clergy and members had been excellent.

Preparation for 'Easter Cracked'

Most schools will again join in, this time Stanton also, during the week commencing 26 March. New scripts have to be learnt and characters developed. Hanslope is included because of the Methodist connections of Revd Mindy Bell.

Stewardship Advisors --- feedback from Church Councils

Revd Paul Smith said that Minute 8 of the Trustees' Meeting on 24 November did not reflect the Ministerial duty to teach the requirement for Christian giving. Revd Andy Jowitt drew attention to the Oxford Diocesan booklet "Giving for Life" and Revd Peter Ballantine said that because many people died intestate an opportunity is missed for remembering the church. Michael Kemp said that it should be easily possible to draft an appropriate clause that people could include in their wills. Church Councils need to have a policy for how to deal with legacies and advise that wills should not be too specific in their terms of reference.

Revd Paul Smith reminded Trustees that all donations, legacies etc. should be acknowledged by a letter of thanks.

6. Confirmation of Ministerial Arrangements from April 2012

All Church Councils had supported the arrangements outlined in Minute 7 of the meeting on 24 November 2011. Therefore, no vote was required from Trustees to ratify the arrangements. Helpful comments had been received from the churches and one encouraging remark was that if the ministers were satisfied, so were the congregation.

It was emphasised that it should be the formal policy of Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership that the ministerial team should include a Non-Conformist Minister.

7. Sharing Agreement for New Bradwell

Progress Report and actions required of other churches in the Partnership

Revd Andy Jowitt said that he and Mike Morris had met with Revd Roger Paul to discuss how best to proceed. Full sharing agreements may be required for all six churches in the Partnership and a Joint Council may have to be set up to be responsible for all buildings. Their paper summarised the situation. The following actions are suggested:

1. *We pursue the establishment of a Sharing Agreement for St James as a first priority*
2. *We pursue the establishment of full Sharing Agreements for St Mary Magdalene and Cross & Stable Church (lacking Baptist Union participation) as a priority, but not so as to delay progress for St James*
3. *We agree the re-establishment of Joint Council (in as simple and practical way as possible) should this prove a necessary step for the establishment of the Sharing Agreements*
4. *A letter is sent on behalf of the PCC and Team Rector to the Registrar of Oxford Diocese, Canon John Rees*

Revd Andy Jowitt proposed and Revd Christine Collinge seconded the proposal that these actions be implemented. Agreed *Nem. Con.*

It was further agreed that the letter (*vide 4 above*) should be copied to the Mission Partnership (Peter Hancock), the Methodist Superintendents and the Methodist Solicitors and the Anglican Archdeacon.

8. Proposed Revised Constitution for Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership

Revd Andy Jowitt introduced a second paper prepared with Mike Morris. In order to address the concerns of John Rees, Diocesan Registrar, dealing with conflict of interest we will need to establish the potential for a quorum of PCC members who are not also trustees of SEP to be able to make a decision for the PCC in such circumstances. The following actions are suggested:

1. *That we bring to the AGM a proposal to proceed with submitting our application (for registration with the Charity Commissioners) and to include the Memorandum of Understanding drafted by the Diocesan Registrar*
2. *That we bring forward to the AGM a scheme that will enable us to comply with the Memorandum of Understanding in the formulation of PCC and SEC*
3. *That, for the protection of trustees, we consider taking advantage of the fact that the PCC is an incorporated body and make decisions through this body where it is to our advantage*
4. *That we endeavour to work together in such a way as to fulfil the legal requirements correctly, but with as light a touch as possible, so that we continue to operate in an effective and ecumenical way*
5. *That we draft Standing Orders and bye-laws that guide us in the above and enable us to function in the ecumenical spirit that we have developed*

It was proposed by Revd Peter Ballantine and seconded by Revd Paul Smith that these actions be implemented. Agreed *Nem. Con.*

The Trustees asked that thanks be recorded in the Minutes to Revd Andy Jowitt and Mike Morris for all their work in connection with agenda items 7 and 8.

9. Finance

Year end results 2011

Maggie and Adrian Prisk presented the income/expenditure accounts for January through December 2011, current Balance Sheet and draft Consolidated Accounts for the year. The overall deficit of £19,586.07 is a little less than anticipated. The finalised accounts will be submitted to the Annual Congregational Meeting in April.

Update on budget for 2012

With a 15% reduction in payment to the Mission Partnership and if churches are able to generate income in accordance with the budgeted figures there should be a net positive balance over the year of about £1,300

Trustees expressed their thanks and appreciation to Maggie and Adrian Prisk for all their work during the past year.

Decision on production of NETwork magazine

Revd Andy Jowitt reported that to date advertising revenue and sponsorship had been secured of £390 (£370 advertising and £20 sponsorship). A further £55-60 of advertising revenue is expected. The balance of £510 needed is reduced to £420 by moneys already held by SEP for NETwork and hopefully can be reduced further by sponsorship. Are SEP willing to subsidize the balance? Bob Cross suggested that SEP should support two further issues. Mike Morris proposed that one more issue should be guaranteed and this was seconded by Michael Kemp. Agreed *Nem. Con.*

10. Citizens:MK

Revd Brian Howden said that because SEP had been able to send the minimum five delegates to the meeting in Newport Pagnell in November 2011 the Partnership had a voice in the selection of priority projects for the current year. 13 SEP representatives were present at the Annual Assembly, to which MP's and MK Councillors had been invited. Revd Andy Jowitt had co-chaired this meeting. Active participants from SEP are needed to join the working parties to give practical expression to our support. The next Delegates Assembly will be on 24 October and the Annual Assembly will be on 20 November 2012. Revd Brian Howden agreed to provide a written report for Trustees.

11. Reports

Chairman of Trustees

Mike Morris in presenting his written report (attached) drew attention to the recent appointments of Director of Ecumenical Mission (Canon John Robertson) and the VentureFX

worker (Rob Winn). He expressed his personal thanks to Revd Andy Jowitt saying it had been a pleasure to work with him over the last three years.

Team Leader

Revd Andy Jowitt, giving his last report (attached) as Team Leader, highlighted the Mothering Sunday Evening Service on 18 March (which will have a Christian Aid theme), the Farewell Service for Revd Chris Collinge on 22 April and the Queen's Jubilee events on 3/5 June 2012. He asked that congratulations and good wishes be conveyed to Revd Mindy Bell and Ted Denney whose second child is expected in July.

Creative Arts

Revd Chris Howden had nothing to add to the Easter Cracked plans (included in item 5).

Evangelism Enabler

The written report (attached) by Revd Andy Jowitt includes information on some events planned for the period of the Olympic Games. Buckingham Archdeaconry is arranging a 'Flame of Faith' journey (large candle being relayed plus smaller candles for retention) this is scheduled to be in Milton Keynes between 23 and 30 May 2012.

Children and Families

Revd Chris Collinge said (report attached) that Judy Thorp had agreed to undertake the post of Safeguarding Officer for the Partnership. It was proposed by Revd Peter Ballantine and seconded by Mike Morris that she be appointed to this office. Agreed *Nem. Con.*

12. Any Other Business

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership is asked by the Methodist Church to endorse changes to Methodist Standing Orders to clarify the definition of 'Minister' as understood by the Denomination. Full details of the resolution had been circulated to Trustees in advance. It was proposed by Revd Chris Collinge and seconded by Bob Cross that the resolution be endorsed. There were sixteen votes in favour, no votes against and no abstentions. Motion carried. Sixteen Trustees were present for the vote.

13. News from the Churches

£12,000 of stonework restoration at St Andrews' church has now been completed; unexpected expenditure of £1,000 had been incurred on heating repairs

A friends group for St Peter's church, Stanton Low, has been formed to preserve the remaining structure and improve the surrounds. Barbara Wright is coordinator.

The Cross & Stable Charities are thanked for their grant aid to St James' church, New Bradwell, for tree work.

Lavina Porter has been authorised to distribute communion to the sick according to Methodist practice.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next Trustees' meeting will be the Annual Congregational Meeting to be held on 19 April 2012, at Stantonbury, Christ Church

15. Forward Date

The Standing Committee will meet on Wednesday 14 March 2012 at 4.30 pm at Downs Barn, Cross & Stable

16. Closing Prayer

Mike Morris closed the meeting with reflection on the busy meeting and important impending changes, asking that our endeavours always be acceptable in the sight of God.