

Minutes of HTC PCC Meeting on Monday, 29 January 2024

Held in the School Room, Trinity House (OBCS)

Present: Revd Richard Hibbert (Chair); Catherine Jupp (Vice-Chair); Keri Husband (Secretary); Nehemiah Akinyele (Treasurer); Chris Howard; John Roy; Matthew Davies; Wilfrid Kendall; Paul Doggett; Megan Bishop; Abraham Saviour Udeh; Laurence Wood; Ambreen Ehsaan; Martin Trewinnard; Pam Hopkins; Churchill Gnanaraj; Revd Carlyne Powell

Apologies: Kathryn Hunter; Julie Wilcockson; Geoff Wilcox; Andrew Selwyn; Alison Jackson; Emmanuel Vasanthkumar

In attendance: Vicki Johnson (Parish Safeguarding Officer); Jack Bishop (Youth and Families' Co-ordinator)

1) **Opening Prayers:** Revd Richard opened the meeting with prayer and a reflection on Exodus 35:21 "...and everyone who was willing and whose heart moved them came brought an offering to the Lord for the work on the tent of meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments". Men and women were asked to offer their wealth, talents and time to support the "tent of meeting".

2) **Conflict of interest:** Revd Richard Hibbert and Revd Carlyne Powell declared a conflict of interest under Vicar's update: Interim Vicar post.

3) Safeguarding

a) **Annual approval of the Parish Safeguarding Policy:** The PCC had been asked to review the Parish Safeguarding Policy before the meeting. There were no questions or comments. **"It is proposed that Holy Trinity's PCC, Coventry, adopts for 2024 the Safeguarding Policy 'Promoting a Safer Church' and Guidelines approved by the Diocesan Synod on 17/03/2018, a Policy which gives due regard to Safeguarding Guidance issued by the House of Bishops".**

Proposed: Revd Richard Hibbert; Seconded: Wilfrid Kendall

This was approved with 16 YESES; 0 NOES and 1 ABSTENTION

b) **Approval of Youth Mentoring Policy:** The Youth Mentoring Policy had been circulated to the PCC for consideration before the meeting. Vicki Johnson, Parish Safeguarding Officer, has had concerns about youth mentoring in the past, but is happy to commend and support this policy as youth mentors will be approved by the Church leadership, provided with training and there will be an agreement to review and follow-up any mentoring arrangement after 6 months.

There was a comment that if a request to set up a mentoring arrangement was declined then the Youth and Families Co-ordinator would approach the family again in one month. Jack responded that this would only be done in exceptional circumstances when it was believed a mentoring arrangement would really benefit the child. It was more likely the family would be approached again in 3-6 months after initially declining the offer.

“It is proposed the PCC accept the Youth Mentoring Policy 2024.”

Proposed: Lawrence Wood; Seconded: Chris Howard

This was approved with 16 YESES; 0 NOES and 1 ABSTENTION

- c) **General Update:** Vicki thanked the PCC members who have completed ‘Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse’ required training, but not everyone has done it and we need to be working towards this. She also commended members to read the Safeguarding Handbook on the Diocesan website, especially Chapter 12 which discusses use of social media.

4) Approval of minutes

- a) The minutes of the PCC meeting held on Monday, 27 November 2023 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.
- b) **Matters arising from previous meetings:**
- i) *Net Zero Working Group:* Martin Trewinnard, John Roy, Paul Doggett, Bill Johnson and Jane Hutton are members of this group and they plan to meet in a fortnight’s time. There is an eco-portal opening on the Diocesan website on 1 February and the PCC Secretary will pass on details to this group.
- ii) *Growth Group Co-Ordinator:* As previously reported, Keri Husband is standing down from this role. She and Revd Richard will meet in February to discuss the role description and advertising for a replacement.
- iii) *Interim Minister Post:* (Revd Richard and Revd Carolyne left the meeting at this point due to a conflict of interest. Catherine Jupp, Vice-Chair, took over the chairing of the meeting.) Chris Howard, Warden, explained to the PCC that the wardens had been approached by members of the congregation about whether the interim Minister post could be made permanent before the end of the 3-year term. The Wardens had not known the answer, so had approached and asked the Diocese. Revd Richard had also completed his half-term review with the Archdeacon Missioner, Ven. Barry Dugmore. The Diocese had sent a very late response about the process that was required to be followed which had been received by the Wardens on Monday, 27 November, which was the date of the last PCC meeting. Rather than delay, the Wardens had asked if this could be added as a late AOB to the meeting and there had not been time to inform PCC members of this item before the meeting.

Chris then updated the PCC about what process would be followed:

- Approval to begin the process of making the interim ministry post permanent, was approved by a majority with an indicative vote at the PCC meeting in November.
- Feedback to be received by the Diocese from Wardens, PCC, Area Dean, Lay Chair of the Coventry North Deanery and Revd Richard.
- A Zoom meeting will be held with the Archdeacon Missioner, Area Dean, Lay Chair and Wardens to discuss the feedback. Revd Richard will join this meeting half-way through.
- A report will be written and passed to the Bishop (in this case, Acting Bishop Ruth) for approval. There are three options which could be given to be approved: (i) making the interim post permanent; (ii) extending the interim post

for a further 3 years; (iii) ending the interim post in March 2025 which means HTC will enter another interregnum.

Chris then asked PCC members, especially those who had sent apologies for November's meeting, if they had any questions or comments. A concern was raised again that this decision had been brought very quickly to the PCC.

The next step would be for PCC members to provide feedback. A review form was shared with PCC members to be filled in and returned by 4 February 2024 (either in paper form or electronic) to Chris Howard. These will then be scrutinised and consolidated by the Wardens and some PCC members.

ACTION: PCC Secretary will circulate a copy of the review form to PCC members to fill in and return to Chris Howard by 4 February 2024.

It was agreed that PCC members who were also staff members would not complete this review form due to a conflict of interest. Staff feedback about Revd Richard would be gathered by Wardens and included in the general feedback report.

(Revd Richard and Revd Carolyne re-joined the meeting after the conclusion of this item and Revd Richard resumed chairing the meeting).

5) Vicar's Update

a) Update on Verger's hours: Chris Hall has responded to the request for a volunteer verger to cover the extra verging hours. He has previous experience of verging. He will be working on a Tuesday, together with the Assistant Verger, Vino Jayakumar, to enable the Church building to be opened. This is in line with our Lone Working Policy. The Assistant Verger has also agreed to work until 6pm on Sunday evenings to cover the Evensong service. These new arrangements will begin on 1 February 2024.

Revd Richard wanted to offer his thanks to the Verger for his work and also to give thanks to the Assistant Verger for her service to the Church.

With the reduction of the Vergers hours from 40 to 32 and the decision not to re-employ to cover these hours there is a small saving to the PCC budget.

b) Update on Prayer Day and Pledge Day: The prayer day had been held on Saturday, 27 January 2024 and Revd Richard thanked those who had prayed. The Pledge Day will be held the following Sunday, 4 February 2024, and Revd Richard asked PCC members to pray about their response to this as we have a deficit which needs to be covered.

c) Reflections on Christmas Services: The Christmas services had been well-attended this year and numbers were significantly higher than previous years. This reflected on the work that had been done to make people aware of what services were happening over the Christmas period, through social media and the handout of services given out in the parish. It was commented that it was particularly good to see the diversity of the Church shown in these services, especially young people and people from different faiths (Sikh/Hindu) as guests of members at the Christmas Eve Midnight Mass service. Two new services were held for the first time, namely the Watch Service held at midnight on New Year's Eve (attended by 177 people) and the Candlemas Service held on 28 January 2024 (attended by 77 people). Youth

and children did the readings at the Candlemas Service and it was asked if the children's involvement in services in this way could be continued to be encouraged.

The Church was able to donate around £1000 to the Cyrenians out of the collections taken at the Christmas services.

6) **Finance update:**

a) **Report from the Treasurer:**

Nehemiah reported that he is currently preparing the 2022 Report and Financial Statements. His only comment on 2023 so far is that there was an increase of inflow from Giving which enables us to meet our increased expenditure. Results are not expected to be worse than predicted.

b) **Approval of Annual Report and Accounts 2021:**

The Annual Report and Accounts 2021 had been prepared and examined by our Independent Auditor who has reported that he has no concerns and that the report is a true and fair reflection of the accounts. These now need to be approved by the PCC. There were no comments or questions arising from the Report and Accounts.

"It is proposed the PCC approve the Annual Report and Accounts 2021".

Proposed: Paul Doggett; Seconded: Pam Hopkins

The Report and Accounts 2021 were unanimously approved.

7) **PCC Away Day reflections:**

The PCC was given an opportunity to reflect on and discuss in small groups the 3 priorities identified at the PCC Away Day in October. Feedback from the discussions were given in written form which the PCC Secretary will collate and include as an addendum to the PCC minutes.

ACTION: Standing Committee will draw some strategic themes from the collated responses which will be shared with the PCC at the next meeting.

8) **Building and Fabrics Update:**

a) The minutes from the last Building and Fabrics Committee meeting was circulated to PCC before the meeting. A question was asked about the need to re-floor the North Porch. It was explained this was needed due to the number of children attending the 11:15am service and the Choir Vestry was no longer large enough for the number of children. Another room was needed for an additional group to meet. The North Porch could then also be used as a meeting place for small groups during the week and on Saturdays.

b) **Approval of replacement pew cushions:**

"The PCC is requested by the Building and Fabric Committee to approve the provision of pew cushions for the remaining pews in the main body of the church and also the Marler Chapel. The cushions would match the existing cushions and provide comfortable seating throughout the church. Indicative costs have been obtained and are as follows: Main body of Church = £2070 and Marler Chapel = £1700. A private gift is being offered to cover the cost of pew cushions for the main body of the church and cushions for the Marler chapel will be provided when funding becomes available".

Proposed: John Roy; Seconded: Ambreen Ehsaan

This was approved with 16 YESES; 0 NOES and 1 ABSTENTION.

9) Deanery and Diocesan Synod Updates:

- a) **Deanery Synod:** Nothing to report as a meeting hadn't been held since the last PCC meeting.
- b) **Diocesan Synod:** John Roy had prepared a report which had been missed off the pre-reading circulated to the PCC before the meeting. The PCC secretary will resend this and any questions or comments can be directed to John Roy and Matthew Davies, Diocesan Synod Representatives.

10) Any Other Business

- a) **HTC Annual Social Media Report:** Sophie Griffiths, Social Media Missioner, prepared a report for the PCC reflecting Holy Trinity's online presence over the past year. Our content has resonated with a large audience and our community of followers has grown to 540 forming a connected and engaged online congregation. There has also been a notable surge in those following our live streamed services, reflecting the expanding and vibrant digital footprint of Holy Trinity Church Coventry. The top-performing posts centred around choir and music. It is also noted that including photographs, rather than graphics, attracted more people to posts. PCC members were encouraged to follow and engage with Holy Trinity's social media presence.
- b) **Update on Vacancy-in-See:** Matthew Davies, Diocesan Synod representative, provided a brief update on the Vacancy-in-See process as he had been a member of the committee. The Committee was drawn from members of the Diocesan Synod and also included the Archdeacons, Bishop's Council and senior clergy. The Committee was tasked with preparing a "Statement of Needs" for the Diocese and electing 6 representatives for the Crown Nominations Committee (CNC). It was also important for the Committee to decide if they were willing to have a Bishop who ordains women. The Committee's work is now concluded and there will now be a long and involved process in which the CNC will look at the statement of needs and discern who to nominate as the next Bishop of Coventry.

The next PCC meeting will be held on Monday, 11 March 2024.

ADDENDUM TO MINUTES

Priorities agreed at the PCC Away Day in October 2023

- 1) **Warmth:** People: engagement; cultural differences; getting involved
- 2) **Worship:** Anglicanism is the hub connecting our multiculturalism and we must ensure we are celebrating the diversity within the Church
- 3) **Wealth:** Time-Talent-Money: How much do we give back to God and how much do we keep; helping us grow in our faith
- 4) **Nurturing confidence**

Feedback from PCC from meeting on 29 January 2024

Warmth: Knowledge gap between the numbers attending and being involved in the service e.g. reading, intercessions, welcome at the door, providing refreshments, communion assistants, offertory assistants, PA team, live streaming team, children's ministry.

All areas of W: providing opportunity and support/training to help people know how to engage with ministry of church.

Warmth: have a "cultural" day to share food of a particular culture and talk about the practice of the Anglican Christian faith in that culture.

Christmas period: Darkness to Light Service through to Candlemas Service – a great example of warmth and talents. Music to attract many people of all ages and religions (noticed a number of Sikhs at the Midnight Mass service).

Commitment of both time and talents from readers and musicians. Hopefully this growth will be reflected in giving and wealth. This is well-picked up in the pledge form.

Welcome: Mid-week

Warmth: Involve more people in services e.g. communion assistants, offertory collections, reading, children's work, intercessions. Also think about using teens and children.

Wealth: Discover people's time and talents e.g. what did they do in their previous church? Talk to them at the end of services.

Warmth: Importance of 'The Table': hosting a meal and different nationalities and hence cultural differences.

Worship: rich diversity in congregations. Encouragement of church members to be involved. Variety of services/new services to reach out to all.

Wealth: Prayer day and pledge forms. Encouragement to think about what we have received from God. The importance of valuing everyone re talents, time and money.

Worship: Diversity of services which speak to a range of people

Warmth: Working well outside of services. Can newcomers be helped through the services?

Worship: We have both choir and contemporary worship. Do we need to involve children more, nurturing the next generation under our guidance?

I am thrilled to affirm all these points. But what increasingly lies on my heart is the absence of local people (both old and young) joining our congregations. Perhaps this reflects God's judgement on our country, maybe this is to be a season of international discipleship (which thrills me!). I'm feeling the take home lesson is for me to pray about this.

Complimentary comments by visitors, especially some who had opportunity to "light candles and pray in the Chapel".

Combined services enable members of the two main Sunday services to meet.

God is sending people to us; we need to welcome them. "We" indicates "them". We are left with "we" when everyone in our church feels valued, and able to be and give what they want, and know they are called to give and receive.

Our heritage is a gift: we must honour it and care for it. So with our people.

God is the one that makes us to be confident in all that we do that pleases His Holy Name.

Warmth: personal invitations; celebrating cultural diversity and traditions; there seems to be a growing number of newcomers. There may not be enough people who are able to guide others through the service. Maybe training others/a special time to explain services?

Worship: Having different languages, in seeing worship in different rhythms/instruments.

Warmth and Worship:

Challenge of involving those who are new or only come for a period.

More different cultural aspects brought into Church e.g. like Churchill singing in Tamil

Find ways to bring confidence to folks.

Warmth:

Our diversity has become a strength and we continue to grow.

How do we encourage us all to join in and be "we"? (joining ministries/teams).

Anglicanism the hub? Isn't Jesus the hub (to ensure we are celebrating the diversity within the Church)? To me, Anglicanism is the loving, open, proactive fomenter of many people's active faith. But...we profess to be part of a 'church' – that goes way beyond Anglicanism. Let's slowly, gently, embrace Christian unity, without losing the wealth of beautiful traditions.

HTC is a beacon of beautiful Christianity, richly enhanced by so many diverse and wholesome aspects of Anglicanism.

In short: Jesus the Hub. All the beauties of Anglicanism to be celebrated...but not to stop there...