

Minutes of the Christ Church Council Meeting 21st October 2009

Present:

Sylvia Ayers, David Bishop, Judith Bishop, Lewis Boyd, Antony Claridge, Mark Elliott [chair], Janet Mahto, Jane Nicholson, Martin Palmer, Robert Siderfin, Andrew Sillett, Margaret Silver, Clive Tilling, Brenda Wall. By invitation: Matthew Jones

1 Apologies:

Margaret Burrows, Margaret Heath, Yvonne Morris, Angela Soboslay,

2 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of June's and September's meeting were approved. [RS; SA]

3 Matters Arising...

- It was noted that Yvonne's position on Council was ex-officio, and she will now stand down following her retirement as Chair of Trustees.
- The Planning Group has met frequently and will report back at the next Council Meeting.

5 Regular Reports

5a Local Ministry Group

Antony continues to support the LMG by celebrating regularly at St Stephen's and St Mary's in their interregnum. This further cements the relationship. The lesson to be learned is that we will need to prepare well for our expected interregnum when his term finishes down next summer: we will need to start discussion on the details after Christmas. The other churches are supporting our patronal festival on 22nd November, and we should use this as a chance to advertise our Advent Carol service.

Antony's chaplaincy at the Theatre Royal has brought visitors into the church.

5b Churches Together In Bath

Sylvia's report from the last meeting is in the current magazine and was not elaborated on. Antony reported that the group is poorly supported and appears to lack direction, although it has arranged the Road Peace service that we will be hosting on 15th November at 16:30.

5c Deanery synod

Lewis Boyd reported that there has been no Deanery Synod meeting since our last Council meeting. The replies to the Diocesan questionnaire have not yet been sent as the submission date has been deferred to January.

6 Christ Church Publicity and Witness in the Community

Matthew updated us on progress with the Jones' publicity initiative. This has been based on their two years London experience, seeing other churches

from the “outsiders” perspective. Publicity is an important part of our evangelism: they report that visitors invariably enjoy the Christ Church experience and like the welcome but note that they only ever choose it “by chance”. We are not visible enough.

A listing of progress to date sparked a number of ideas and much discussion, and is recorded here in outline:

- The website is now updated weekly. The Jones’ London experience shows a good website is essential for any younger people looking for a place to worship. There are probably tools to improve our visibility on the internet further. We could usefully arrange to demonstrate this to congregation members who do have not internet access; - they too can advertise it to others.
- CTB has produced a leaflet of Bath places of worship which includes us. There are rumours of an electronic advertising screen going into local hotels that could include us.
- Post cards have been done for Mothers’ Day, Harvest etc., but a disappointing level of willingness by the congregation to distribute these has been noted. Cards advertising our Christmas services should be out in time for people to put them into their local Christmas Cards.
- Angela Berners Wilson has distributed a pamphlet to new students, which we should get into Bath Spa too.
- Targeted advertising for Evensongs is needed.
- We should use Antony’s Theatre role to present ourselves, eg via the Bath Chronicle, as “The Actors’ Church”
- We might host a pantomime with a charity link; possibly a children’s pantomime.
- A clearer “Corporate Image” is needed to differentiate us from other churches. This will require a professionally designed logo, leading to templates giving a Christ Church “look-and-feel” to all our documents.
- We need to make more impact outside the building: the notice board is not eye-catching enough. The church name must be clearly visible to all, but at present we are anonymous, particularly along the pavement wall and at the east end. We also need to build the corporate image via notice boards etc inside the building.
- Could we get a brown tourist Place-Of-Interest fingerpost erected on Lansdown Road?
- Our welcome is ok after the service but there are still no pre-service welcomers at the door. We need a rota, as discussed in Council some years ago.
- One issue is still how to get publicity into new people’s hands. Could the Magazine be more widely distributed, maybe changed to quarterly and money spent producing it in colour? Could we target newcomers to town via Estate Agents? And use Bath Life and Bath Magazine for more overt advertising? The need for geographically wide-spread publicity was noted – there is no specific local catchment and our own congregation come from a wide area.
- We must be clear what it is that makes Christ Church special to us; maybe asking congregation members and reporting back next meeting.
- We could have a “back-to-church” Sunday to challenge lapsed worshippers.

8 AOB

A possible Play Day in the New Year will be discussed at the next meeting, which is on 26th November.