

The Parish of St Nicholas Church Remenham.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council

held on Thursday 16th December, 2010 in The Chantry House.

Present: Father Martyn Griffiths (Rector), Michael Dowsett, (Churchwarden), Nigel Gray (Treasurer), Rosemary Duckett (Secretary), Anthony West, Leslie and Anthea Prescott, Ruth and Glen Palethorpe, Peter Sly.

Prayers: Led by the Rector.

Apologies: Charlotte Every (Churchwarden), Eileen Dowsett, Ann Shemilt.

Matters Arising:

None.

Finance:

The Treasurer presented the accounts. He flagged up concerns and stated that there were significant issues as the outgoings exceed the income and whilst this year we have been able to inject funds from the Strange Fund, that cannot continue, and we should not use up the reserves. Anthony West asked about the Parish Hall donations and Peter Sly commented that the money spent on the hall has increased the donations. The money from Park Place has not been going through the accounts as they have been paying the invoices direct, but Anthony West said that they should be noted for historical purposes. So far Park Place have contributed £15,675.02 towards building works to the Church and £2,576.60 towards the Parish Hall. Fr Martyn said that the overspending has been going on for over 5 years and should be addressed. He made 2 suggestions, at present we pay the organist £35 per week which amounts to approximately £1700.00 per year and as St Mary's is going to advertise for a new organist/music master, part of their appointment should be playing for St Nicholas with a remuneration of around £1,000.00. He also noted that the garden contractors charge over £4,000.00 per year and a new contract should be negotiated. Nigel Gray will progress this. Anthony West felt that Wokingham would be incompetent and hopeless. Nigel asked if he could write to the diocesan secretary with copies to Bishops John & Colin, the Area Dean & the Archdeacon pointing out that we contribute 68% of our income to the diocese, and that we should reduce the Parish Share we need to remain solvent. He would also ask why there is to be a 2% increase when they have not looked at their own Church House expenses. Mike Dowsett pointed out that Reading had had problems in the past and wondered how they had got their own way.

Building Works:

The stained glass windows have been repaired and replaced, but the chancellor would not give a faculty for the guards. The conservation officer came whilst the contractors were there and looked at the proposed guard whilst he had no problem with them he felt that we would need planning permission as it is a listed building. Rosemary Duckett said that she would ask Antony to progress the matter. All the guards are made and ready to be fitted. An invoice will be sent to Park Place.

Any other business

Antony West had 3 items:

1. The congregation was dwindling and it is unrealistic to expect it to go on, it had been disappointing that only 19 people had attended when Bishop Colin took the service. Something fairly dramatic needs to be done and that we should be more proactive. He would like to put proposals to the next standing committee meeting. Peter Sly suggested that we should all be encouraged to bring a friend.
2. He asked who owns the hall. Fr Martyn explained that it belongs to the Diocesan Trustees of Oxford and that the PCC are the custodian trustees and the hall committee are a sub committee of the PCC and each member should be appointed by the PCC. Anthony West will write to the diocese to get clarification to which the Rector agreed.
3. He also asked why the PCC meetings are held in the Chantry House now that the hall works are complete. Rosemary Duckett will check with Jenny Law that the hall is available and future meetings will be held there.

Henley Deanery Synod:

Anthea Prescott presented her report:

1. The parish shares are due to be paid in November and that a 3% discount is offered if paid on time
2. Members were informed that Plough Wednesday would be held on 26th January 2011 in the Wallingford/Didcot Deanery.
3. The speaker was Canon Edmund Newell, Sub-dean of Christ Church Cathedral, who emphasised that the cathedral is open every day for worship and would welcome visits from all parishioners, and parish groups are encouraged to arrange visits.
4. Leaflets were handed out for "Reading the Bible, A simple Guide" and a few had been handed out at St Nicholas and some left at the back of the Church.

The next meeting of the standing committee will be held on 4 March in the office at 09.30 and the Parochial Church Council will be held on 17 March at 8.00pm probably in the Parish Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.40