***The Parochial Church Council of the Parish of Marcham with Garford***

**Wednesday 29th November 2023 – 7.45pm in Marcham Centre Small hall**

**MINUTES**

Rev Nick Weldon (NW) Chrystal Poon (CP) Ali Lyndon (AL)

Catherine Mentzel (CMe) Carolyn Whiting (CW) Sue Lawton (SL)

Bryan Eccles (BE) Jonathan Boardman (JB) Chris Nutman (CN)

Tim Jack (TJ) Caroline Manders (CM) Barney Stevens (BS)

Danni Grady (DG) Neil Rowe (NR) 8pm John Scoble (JS) 8pm

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| *No.* | *Item* |
| **1.**  **2.**  **3. 4.**  **5.** | **Welcome, Bible reading and opening prayer: NW Psalm 25 Apologies for absence –** Ruth Atkins, Tony Carter, Tamsin Gilbert, James Gilbert, David Lunn.  **Conflicts of interest** – NR for salaries discussion, item 11.1  **Minutes of the meeting of 25th Oct 2023** – approved as an accurate record.  **Matters arising –** Further discussion about payment of St Luke’s organist has occurred between meetings. This has been resolved that it is not appropriate, he is the same as any of our volunteers.  Item 15 from last minutes – attended by SL and BS. |
| **6.** | **Update on Living in Love and Faith following November General Synod: NW**  NW asked if anyone needed clarification. SL asked about whether doing nothing is sensible, NW explained we are just not committing to one path or another yet. TJ mentioned that because we don’t yet have the pastoral guidance that is a reason not to make changes just yet. NW said the guidance is incomplete and is a draft. CMe asked whether there is any legal backing, this is unclear. The legal advice that was given to the Bishops has not been made public.  CW expressed that the prayers are for people not for an institution, and feels they are not changing institution, and they will start in December as part of a service and the stand alone services will start in March. NW explained a stand alone service will need a vote at General Synod in 2025 Under canon B2 before they can be done in church. Prayers of blessing for within a service will happen sooner in some churches that choose to opt-in.  JS asked for clarity on when the trial services might take place – this is to be discussed at the sitting of the house of Bishops in December.  A written response from St Luke’s was passed around requesting gay blessings to be offered at St Luke’s as early as possible. NW stated that he had no prior knowledge of the statement. This is included as an appendix to this meeting.  JB mentioned the possibility of legal challenges if we do conduct prayers of blessing.  NW raised that we need to consider the implications of any decision we make on the wider community, the congregation, the employees of the church, the PCC, the church wardens, the clergy who serve in the parish and himself as vicar. Also the implications for our parish, including the school community.  More clarity is needed before any decision can be made – would be sensible to update at February meeting after next synod meeting.  CMe asked PCC to pray for wisdom. |
| **7.** | **Mission Committee** (progress report) **JG** (via NW)  Individuals in the committee have been linked up with our mission partners – Jane Weldon – Ripple effect, Sue Lawton – Andy and Emma Dipper, Julia Davies – MML, Sarah Lunn – Thirsty. Other members of the committee are NW , AL and the meeting is chaired by JG. Support for mission partners has been reviewed. Looking to communicate better to the congregation. |
| **8.**  **8.1**  **8.2**  **8.3** | **All Saints Reordering Project Update**  Christian Randall is working up plans so they can be put to contractors.  Marvin Symes, fundraiser from Plunkett foundation has been approached. He has a day rate or 8% cut from any grant received.  Marcham and Garford trust which was set up in 1997 as a ‘friends of’ fund could be used for grants to go into for expenditure for reordering project. This can also receive donations specific to the reordering project, which keeps it separate from church funds. Trustees are vicar and church wardens. CW offered to find a representative from Garford to be a trustee. |
| **9.**  **9.1**  **9.2**  **9.3**  **9.4**  **9.5**  **9.6** | **Fabric update: NR/CW**   * AS video projector – trial next week, cost is £2000 if we decide to go ahead. * Piano – see attached report. Agreed to proceed with £1000 piano. * AS Coping stones and tiles above vestry – too late to complete until Spring now, awaiting list B permission. They will be made safe over the winter. * St Luke’s church yard lighting – faculty application in progress. * St Luke’s toilet and tap – CW to discuss with TG and Neil Walker. * St Luke’s bell – Historic churches trust application is being completed for a grant. Some fundraising will also be carried out in the village. |
| **10.** | **St Luke’s: CW**  Planning for next years services. Aim is 2 per month, First Sunday at 11am. Choir has 18 members now.  3 more cylinders of gas ordered.  NR mentioned that the part has come in to repair broken heater, to be fixed tomorrow. |
| **11.**  **11.1**  **11.2** | **Financial update including 2024 budget: JS**  NR left whilst we discussed salaries. Since March when we last reviewed this CPI has increased by 2.89%. JS feels this isn’t significant enough to change salaries now, and we should wait and discuss again in May, we agreed.  Hugh Lawton joined the meeting at this point.  Projected deficit for year end is £15,000.  Discussed budget for next year – projected deficit of £46,000. Some savings identified.  Quinquennial due next year which will lead to some expenditure.  BE advised not to approve budget at this stage, suggested looking again to see where savings can be made. JS to discuss with Hugh Lawton and update in January. |
| **12.** | **Safeguarding update: RA** absent but sent report:   * Three ongoing cases with safeguarding agreements in place for each. * PSO Diocesan meeting took place virtually on 20/11/23 and key items of discussion were the PSO safeguarding service which took place on 19/11/23 and safeguarding information and where it is stored (Ruth and Shae are looking at this in more detail). The next meeting is in January 2024. |
| **13.** | **School Foundation Governor vacancy: NW**  Still a vacancy, can switch one of the current governors (Patience Brace) to be a foundation governor if no-one else comes forward. |
| **14.** | **Health & Safety**  None noted. |
| **15.**  **15.1**  **15.2** | **A.O.B.**  Hope explored course to be offered in January via zoom on Monday evenings. Evangelistic course which will be promoted at Christmas services.  Christmas Charities – CP proposed Abingdon Food Bank and Tearfund for AS, CW proposed Oxfordshire Homeless charity for St Luke’s giving. These were approved. Half of giving will be to church funds, half to charities. |
| **16.** | **Closing prayer** |

**PCC next meetings:**

Christmas drinks and nibbles - Wednesday 20th December from 7.45pm at the Marcham Centre Small Hall

Wednesday 24th January 2024, 7.45pm at the Marcham Centre Small Hall