

Being Transformed by Jesus to see the Kingdom come

PCC RETREAT 2015

Approved by PCC on 1st June 2015



Date: Friday 24th-Saturday 25th April 2015
Venue: Hill House
Chair: Paul Langham

FRIDAY 24th April

Present: Erica Bebb, Brendan Biggs, Patrick Bolster, Leighton Carr, Lindsey Cutter, David Daniels, Martin Freye, Melanie Griffiths, Derek Hadden, Paul Langham, Tim Meathrel, Val Moore, Andy Murray, Mark Parsons, Granville Sykes, Sara Wadsworth, Rosemarie Hall (Minutes)

Apologies : Alice Denyer, Jill Garfitt, Janet Lee, Sian Lowe, Graham Stuart

Bible Reflection: Tim Meathrel led a short time of worship and time was spent reflecting on Proverbs 2: 1-11.

1. **Welcome and Opening comments.** Paul Langham thanked the team for all their work in the recent challenges with the spire – particularly Mark, Tiffany and Grace. It was also particularly good news that Pre-school were back in session.

Martin Freye was welcomed to his first meeting. Alice Denyer was unable to attend. She is currently training at Trinity so her standing to serve on Deanery Synod will be particularly useful.

It was noted that even though there are just one or two new members, it is a new PCC.

2. **Election of Officers:-**

PCC Secretary – Rosemarie Hall had kindly agreed to stand, proposed by Paul Langham, seconded by Lindsey Cutter, carried unanimously.

Treasurer – Patrick Bolster had kindly agreed to stand, proposed by Paul Langham, seconded by Melanie Griffiths, carried unanimously.

Vice Chair – PL proposed, Jill Garfitt and Derek Hadden, seconded by Rosemarie Hall, all in favour.

Electoral Roll Officer – Mark Parsons was willing to stand, proposed by Paul Langham, seconded by Tim Meathrel, carried unanimously.

The meeting took a short time to pray for all those who had been elected.

Saturday 25th April

Present: Erica Bebb, Brendan Biggs, Patrick Bolster, Leighton Carr, Lindsey Cutter, David Daniels, Martin Freye, Jill Garfitt, Melanie Griffiths, Derek Hadden, Paul Langham, Tim Meathrel, Val Moore, Andy Murray, Mark Parsons, Granville Sykes, Sara Wadsworth,

Apologies: Alice Denyer, Janet Lee, Sian Lowe

1. News for PCC

Website – it is recognised that work needs to be done to improve the website. That new database will enable this to be addressed at some point.

Advert for Children’s Minister – A series of conversations on Skye from a potential candidate who is moving back to the UK later this year had taken place with a view to organising a formal interview by Skype in June. Members were asked to pray.

CC Primary School – Jane Gillis’s amazing job in CC Primary School has been built on by Andy Murray who has become a major ambassador. The new Head Teacher has expressed a keen interest in building closer links. Conversations about potential funding for an extra day for the successful Children’s Minister when appointed have taken place. Members were asked to be prayerful about this.

Paul reminded the meeting that the day after the church family were advised of the deficit in the past a letter had been received advising of a large bequest. On Thursday 16th April when things were challenging in relation to the spire another letter detailing another bequest which will hopefully prove to be substantial had arrived. There is a process to go through but at this stage, things look optimistic. God’s faithfulness was once again to be seen in action!

A time of worship followed starting in Psalm 51 allowing time for a period of confession.

Session 1 - What The PCC is for?

PL began by remind the PCC that “A PCC exists to:-

Church Representation rules (full version available from Mark)

- **Co-operate with the Incumbent in Promoting the Whole Mission in the Parish** (Ecclesiastical) 4 areas:
 - Pastoral – care of family
 - Evangelistic – care of those not in the family (Pre-School)
 - Social – to bless it’s community (Pre-School)
 - Ecumenical – don’t do it alone, partnership

A strong sense of being called to bless the parish and wider community has been a common theme of late.

CC is a larger Anglican church (more than 350 attendance each week). We need to be aware that the Representation Rules of the C of E were written for much smaller churches. They make no

reference to paid staff or to the complexities of a large organisation such as a large church like Christ Church.

PCC relationships were identified as:-

1. Diocese (WE are the Diocese; it's not "them"): relationship with Deanery Synod (Clergy and lay members, Brendan, Alice, Val, Mel)
2. Every PCC is required to have a Standing Committee. Due to debate the structure etc. in more detail in the May meeting including election of new lay members

Above are the "given" standard relationships.

Two other relationships exist:-

1. **Sub Groups** – either ongoing or short term to complete specific tasks
2. **Staff Team.**

Tensions of how to relate within and between these groups needs to be worked out. In some churches the SC (or similar) often becomes the Executive. The PCC gives a remit to sub groups to do certain work OR we recognise a piece of work needs to be done.

The Staff Team are given authority to run ministries on a daily basis.

The journey of inter-working is often a source of tension.

The five areas of PCC like ours - Responsibilities:-

1. **Vision** – setting what the church is for; why does it exist? Do we know?? We have done a lot of work on Vision; moved church correctly to a more Biblical vision...but not yet received from God the specific calling for this season for CC. We are a Church that has yet to discern our particular purpose under God.
2. **Finance** – need to provide and steward the finances
3. **Other resources** – principally buildings and things. (3 buildings:- Church, Linden Gate, 60 Clifton Park Road) and things (P.A. equipment etc.)
4. **Staffing** (care and recruitment)
5. **Policy** (health and safety, safeguarding etc)

It was noted that Legal responsibilities apply to all of the above. Corporate rather than individual responsibility.

2 Towards a PCC Charter

Characteristics of a PCC:-

1. **Ambassadors** (2 Cor 5:20)
2. **Confidentiality** (Joseph OT-Mary NT-) More detailed discussions will be needed *
3. **Corporate Responsibility** (Acts 15/Galatians)
4. **Focus** (Nehemiah :1-4)

*Sharing of ideas in a safe place is needed....

Derek asked the PCC to split into groups and to read and use Matthew 5, “The Sermon on the Mount”, imagining they were one of Jesus’ Disciples and remembering that Jesus was not going to be with them for much longer. The groups were asked to consider what are the foundational principles by which the PCC /Church should be working and ministering.

Feedback was shared as follows:-

AMBASSADORS

- Salt and Light – into THE community and into OUR community
- Encouraging one another
- Willingness to speak the truth in love
- For each other – how we speak about each other – heart attitude
- Standing together
- Representing: serving, approachable, open
- Voices of the vision
- Carry / represent authority – Jesus / church (trust / steward)
- There for the good of the whole
- Modelling power – heaven touching earth

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

1. Expression to sum up – sign of the life of the church
2. Has to be mindset – corporate rather than individual – can be a tension as we have individual spiritual passion
3. Once Decision made we act as one. What happens if we disagree? Do we need guidelines when this happens?
4. Representation – how can we represent the whole church? Not practical. Feedback trends and responsibility to communicate with those people groups.
5. Maintaining – within reason bring people with us. Focus – communicate and nurture.

FOCUS

1. High level strategic leadership
 - a. Setting direction
 - b. Without being drawn into lots of detail – this is for subgroups, staff, executive/SC
2. Avoiding a scattergun approach to what we do as a church and as a PCC
3. Clarity of vision/direction for this next season.
4. Reviewing how well we are doing to achieve this
5. Not fire-fighting, but being strategic!

PL read Genesis 12:1-5. Faith or Risk? God calls us to balance human ability and wisdom with prophetic faith and risk.

3 Questions were posed from the passage:-

1. What are the risks that Abram and family faced?
2. What are the incentives?
3. Where is the certainty for Abram?

The group were encouraged to spend time alone to listen to the Lord etc.

PRIORITIES

Tim & Jill led a time to look at what the priorities for the next year should be and how do we structure what we do as a PCC accordingly. The group were asked to share any insights they felt were appropriate:-

- Faith and how we should be using our faith muscles.
- Applying faith, particularly in relations to our finances.
- Closing the back door – how do we welcome newcomers, pastoral support, mission shaped communities, simplify, communications.
- Listening to God. He is speaking; how do we communicate that speak to each other, not being afraid of what he is saying?
- Order in the chaos, the chaos of our lives, how he uses it, He decides.
- Future fruit – generational “Father of many nations” We can be preoccupied with our own blessing. If we have our heart in the right place and push through.
- Abram could only be certain God was true. Relationship with God is never the same once God has moved into risk. You can do it but you can never go back. Called to a deeper life or a shallower life; not a normal life. SurpriseThreshold you can never go back on.
- Leaving his Father’s household. Leave behind the priorities for the previous generation and move into a new thing. What is the new contribution CC is being called to make – different from the past? Putting past behind to some degree.
- Should be ambitious for our church – is it for the people?
- Abram did take people with him – probably with him or rebellion. He would have had to communicate his vision well and regularly.
- Being blessed but blessing others. All the peoples of the earth will be blessed through you....
- Calling to go/be a blessing.. Call to look outside. Step back, simplify what you do and how you do it.
- Mission partners would identify with leaving the family, environment etc. In the present culture it is becoming increasing challenging for us to stay where we are day to day...
- Abram communicating – he had them all with him. Recognising God’s call. Would love to be able to hear more clearly. Helping people within and outside our church to hear God is important.
- The land that I will show you. He shows us when we need.
- Stepping out to bless others... circle
- When we feel the most content/happiest is when we feel we are in the right place.
- We can think of all our stuff as our security. Contrast with when the Disciples were sent out empty handed.
- Risk – there is no risk apart from looking stupid

- Good gifts have been given to us – danger we will sit down and feel safe. But give and it will be given to you. It is still down to us to continue what we should be doing rather than rely on the generous gifts of others.

The meeting were then asked to go for a walk in the grounds as Tim and Jill led us.

Challenge or walking PAST the boundary – into the places marked “no access”. In another part of the grounds a sign was to be seen “Danger – Minefield” – are we willing to go to the place of danger? The group then prayed together as we stepped into the danger zone as a sign of obedience/commitment.

In summary it was noted that we will re-address this later; this is the start of a journey.

Tim shared his reflections from the time of Paul’s sabbatical. He reflected on the last year including the redundancy process, when six staff members were lost in June 2014. CC has now entered into a season of seeing what would happen with volunteers stepping into gaps. Tim reflected that over the last three months we have not managed to do any more than keep things going. We were not able to do much more with Paul & Jackie being away. We are still doing a huge number of ministries – but it largely calls on the staff team and key volunteers. Has the time come to consider how we allocate resources and what are the criteria for how we do that? Are there things we may have to stop doing? Do we need to slim things down in order to offer quality pastoral care and support. Food for thought...

It was noted that the Clergy etc. need pastoral support. It is of great importance. Leadership need to be able to feel supported and encouraged.

Truscott Report – Mark re-reads it regularly. Many of the issues raised in 2012 are still current and in need of consideration.

One member expressed surprise that in a church where there are so many clergy it should not be the case that things cannot be sustained. We have a large number of very willing and sacrificial volunteers.

There are constantly new people coming to CC but are they involved in something?? There is an issue of people not being willing to be team leaders and carry some responsibility as well as just working within teams.

It was noted that BEING (understanding who we are) is important and then the DOING will come.

The meeting concluded that there is a need to look at how we are doing things with what we have got before we make decisions??

It was also noted that the people of our church are passionate to get out into the community/parish!!

How should we focus our energy as a church? Small groups?? (Church Cleaning) Does the current format of Church Family News take away the personal approach??

Tim highlighted that streamlining may not necessarily mean cutting back

Leighton highlighted that Renew will involve a lot of input from the membership (more things of a different kind). How do we re-model what we did last year is not the right question. We should instead, start from where we are now – a NEW THING...

Preparing to be out of the church for Renew... what's the role of small groups? Moving out of boundaries does not mean keeping doing what we are doing as current.

Challenge to reflections from Paul from being back from sabbatical. Should there be a team sharing reflections and come back to PCC?

Next few months does have to be preparatory for Renew....is this a transition period?

What is the process for planning PCC meetings:-

- Clarity around Vision
- Renew – implications / what do we do planning to move out...what's the role of small groups
- Stepping out into evangelism and mission
Simplifying and streamlining.
Volunteer leaders

A question was posed about what proportion of the congregation are in small groups? Currently we are not sure but there are around 29 groups but it should be noted that some members of small groups no longer attend CC.

Values....

PL – Genesis 11 27- Genesis 12 : 1-5 Everything was at risk. Incentives are all future – significant. Privilege of being a blessing.

Lot – an orphan ; he was the “adventurer”?

Certainty is 0 at the point of call.

Call

No more detail until obey

“settled” a negative word in Scripture. Not want to be settled or lose sight of the vision.

Has the church (local and wider) lost its calling?

Excitement of the sense of clarity and unity....

Andy led a time of closing worship around Psalm 46. Call to trust God when all around you is unsettled or falling over...”Be still....” God makes the declaration that he will be exalted and we can trust whole-heartedly in his strength.

AOB

PL and Leighton have put in bids for finances from the Council for Pre-school. Results will be communicated when known.

The meeting closed with prayer at 5.30pm