

Notes of the PCC Retreat 2017 (Approved by PCC 12.07.2017)

Friday 19th May – in the Church Building

- 7.30 Drinks and nibbles and a chance to get to know each other better
- 8.00
1. Setting the scene for the weekend
 2. Worship, testimony & '**Listening in Worship**'
 3. Prayer Ministry for each other – for where we are on our personal journey
- 9.30 Finish

Saturday 20th May - in the Garden Room at Holy Trinity Nailsea (BS48 4NG)

9.00 Arrive & Refreshments

9.15 '**Listening in Scripture**'

Jill began by explaining the context for the day; the aim being to practice discernment (listening to God for his will) in various ways. To enable this, the timetable includes lots of times of silence throughout the day and the day has been planned so that various “voices” are heard. The Standing Committee met in April to plan the agenda and the following themes were identified:

- Our journey: Where are we? What do we need to focus on next?
- Living in the Spirit – needs wholehearted commitment
- Army
- Road map for the journey

Listening in Scripture – Acts 6: 1-6 was read and a time of silence followed.

The meeting reflected on *what do we as PCC/leadership need to give our attention to?*

The meeting broke into groups to reflect and share feedback :-

Group 1:

- *Practical /prayer elements were intertwined*
- *Hunger – “distribution”.....*
- *Recognised that doing practical tasks still needed to be “Spirit Led” and they were commissioned for the tasks*
- *Those who had “grumbled” were looked after.*
- *Unity across the community*
- *They let people know they were cared for/about*
- *Touch –laid hands on – connected together*
- *Leaders were challenged...*
- *Prayer – practice what we preach!*
- *Noticed that discipleship didn’t make a distinction between leaders and people*
- *Sense of “Let my people Go”! Empowering*
- *People complained - even in the early church*
- *Choose – how open handed are the leadership were – they came up with the answer “choose” but invited the church into partnership*
- *Appears that the leadership just made the decision (no reference to prayer etc.) Appointed to make decisions.*
- *Full of Holy Spirit and wise*

- *12 knew they could trust others*
- *“Daily distribution” how do we care for our community on a daily basis.*
- *Practical needs were paid attention to*
- *Distribution of responsibility*
- *Breath of God made it all come together*
- *Clergy concentrated on prayer*

Group 2:

- *Sense of being overlooked, neglected (job not being done) what has been overlooked in CC?*
- *People doing practical were still full of the Spirit and wise...*
- *Caleb/Joshua back from Promised Land = they had faith and wisdom – link to us finding leaders to do practical work....need to be wise*
- *Can't do it all – when worked out who does what – word of God was spread – everyone walking in the same direction. Division – talked and discussed and made decision to do the work.*
- *The church family – noting journey we have been on. How do we appropriately recognise....*
- *Caring*
- *Complaints – irritation but also recognition of need*
- *Practical matters*
- *Division of responsibility*
- *We are placed – are we using our gifts?*
- *Leaders of leaders (need to be looking at whether we are delegating effectively)*
- *Sometimes we can look down on those with the practical gifts...they were also full of faith and Holy Spirit – we need both...*

10.00 Key discussion 1: PCC Subgroups

Mark Parsons led this item and a paper was distributed at the meeting. During this section the PCC looked at our key governance sub-groups: Finance, Buildings, Personnel and a proposal for a new Risk Management group. They considered how these sub groups can be more effective, how they should be managed and how they should report to and be accountable to the PCC.

The meeting noted that:

- The size of the PCC means we need to delegate
- It is recognised that sub groups are not working well at present
- Terms of reference need to be clear.

The sub-groups can be divided into two categories

- Legal/statutory
- Practical

The discussion at this meeting was to concentrate on the Legal/statutory sub groups. Currently these are:-

- Buildings Team
- Finance
- Personnel Team
- It is suggested that we also need a “Risk Management” Team (to cover Health & Safety, risk Management and Fire/Safety etc.)

Sub Groups are useful because they contain people with expertise not necessarily found on PCC, they save time and allow more people to get involved, thus allowing them to be more task focussed.

Aspects that aren't working too well at present were identified as:-

- Remit not known
- Groups have no regular meeting pattern

- No regular reporting pattern back to PCC or expectations for reporting back.

It was noted that each group has specific expertise within it. No group secretaries exist so notes are not always taken or are inadequate. Groups are often full of ideas but these do not result in actions being taken.

The meeting were invited to break into groups and consider the following two questions:

1. What are the key advantages of having sub groups?
2. What key issues are we facing?

There was a brief discussion around Mark Parsons being involved in all of the three sub groups and a need to protect his time. However, at this stage it was felt that Mark should continue to be on the groups. It was noted that the Chair of the groups should be discussed within each group.

The proposal as outlined in the paper was considered:-

One way to address this is for the PCC to form a small task group to consider the following and bring back detailed proposals to the June PCC:

1. *Revise Terms of Reference for each of the four subgroups*
2. *A reporting calendar for how each group will report back to the PCC*
3. *Provisional dates for each subgroup for the coming year*
4. *Proposals for membership of each group*
5. *Proposals for a chair and secretary for each group (alongside the “technical expert” if appropriate)*
6. *Priorities for each group*

The focus of this task group should be limited to the three existing governance groups (Buildings, Finance and Personnel) and a new group focusing on risk management.

This was proposed by Mark Parsons, seconded by David Daniels and carried unanimously. A report will be given at the June PCC meeting.

The members of the small task group was agreed as follows:-

- Mark Parsons
- Derek Hadden (Chair)
- Brendan Biggs
- Helen Albon

The PCC were invited to feed any offers of help regarding involvement in the sub groups and names of people with the required skills to be advised to Derek.

It was also noted that the existing groups should be advised that they are under review.

The meeting also agreed that some of the others sub groups should report to another body but this needed further consideration. It was noted that perhaps a “Mission Group” should exist which perhaps some of the other sub groups could report to.

11.00 Coffee Break

During which the group took the opportunity to look around the Holy Trinity Nailsea complex which has been refurbished over a period of 8 years.

11.30 ‘Listening in Silence’ 15 mins

12.00 Key discussion 2: RENEW – moving it forward

During this section the PCC revisited the RENEW project, looking at the work which has been done on the larger scheme since the PCC last looked at this, and a proposal for how the scheme may be tackled in phases.

A paper was distributed and an opportunity given to read and reflect and then consider:-

1. What is God saying about journey that we have been on?
2. What is God saying about the Journey ahead with RENEW?

Groups then fed back

What is God saying about journey that we have been on?

- *What was RENEW doing?*
- *Learning the lessons that had to be learnt (painful – organ) / Coffee Shop. Need to support leaders and those implementing.*
- *Good to see church opening up*
- *Café being used for groups (students/artists/knitters)*
- *Tentative*
- *Weary of consultation after consultation – just want to get on with it – in stages (Crypt seems good)*
- *Getting professionally managed*
- *Most of congregation are numb*
- *Coffee shop well received*
- *Frustration of stopping and starting but steps made have been good, despite initial scepticism*
- *Architectural fees – more plans (are they a waste of money?)*
- *Sense that God’s timing has been perfect*
- *At times painful and poor but God has provided the key people in the past (Leighton)*
- *Made wrong turns (organ?)*
- *Things not currently working (equipment)*

What is God saying about the Journey ahead with RENEW?

- *Need to see the benefits of Phase 1*
- *Not communicating well – regular needed for the church family etc.*
- *Plan to avoid the painful lessons of the past*
- *Prepare for some disappointment (expectations of storage at HT)*
- *We need to know why we are starting with the Crypt*
- *Right time for next step*
- *How a single step is a step in the right direction. Doing something shows commitment. Need to be clear about motivation.*
- *Need to maintain essential services so that we have a functional building.*
- *Keeping focus – avoid distractions. Set goal will show the church family that we are taking action.*
- *Time is right now*
- *People are ready*
- *Want the community to come into the building*
- *Right atmosphere (spiritual)*
- *Holistic sense of worship*
- *Groups throughout the building*
- *Resourcing place learning/training to be sent out*
- *Building on what is already happening*
- *Being strong and courageous in our decision making.*
- *Trust in God and amongst us.*

Specific Words/pictures were also shared:-

- *Picture of people lined up as an army – break that up - leaders to empower people to step out their comfort zone. Encourage people to step out of line - courage*
- *Opportunity to empower people in the spiritual gifts*
- *Volcanic eruption (positive) Glory of God empowering the church/people. Building pressure*
- *Beach ball – lightweight (in the past no one wanted to catch it – “hot potato”) Now is the time to catch the ball and do something with it – simplicity*
- *? How does RENEW deliver the Vision? Luke `12 Where your treasure is.”*
- *Need for community*
- *Timing – this being the time to move forward.*
- *Church Out – Christ In etc. – RENEW needs to be part of the vision....not just a function.*
- *Sense of quality finish – don’t compromise to get cheaper deal...if want it to last, we need to invest*

Mark Parsons then gave a two minute summary of the plans as outlined on the circulated document, stressing that any work on the crypt would impact the opportunities to implement the more fuller scheme as designed by Leighton and the RENEW team. It was therefore vital for the PCC to decide if it was committed to this fuller scheme before considering a phased approach.

Questions from the PCC

1. *Does phased approach mean we don’t have to move out of the building?*

It’s unlikely we will need to move out of the building if we are just working on the crypt, however we will need to consider alternative locations for the activities which currently happen in the crypt – both on Sundays and midweek.

2. *Does saying yes to being in favour of the larger scheme mean all the plans are fixed?*

Not necessarily but there are various key aspects that need to be fixed now, such as the location of stairways and lifts as these will impact on the larger scheme.

Feedback suggests there is still concern about doing the whole project but there is a hunger to “do something” and as a leadership we need to show that we are doing something. Refurbishing the Crypt is doable financially and is where much of the activity of the church takes place. It was also agreed that we should everything which serves the rest of the project and nothing that prevents us from doing the rest of the project in the future.

Discussion continued around how to address the lighting issues in the Crypt, and some solutions are actively being considered for this.

The meeting then discussed the following proposals/questions:

1. Is the PCC still in favour of the larger scheme* as the long term direction for the refurbishment of the church building?

** This is the scheme as presented in November 2015 but amended with the revised proposals for the location of the offices and extended kitchen – as shown in the plans in the appendix.*

This is a key decision. It is not committing us to delivering the wider scheme, but it is committing us to designing and developing any future work (phases) with the wider scheme in mind.

Proposed by Peter Smithson, seconded by Cluff Noon carried with 1 abstention. AGREED

If so, would the PCC support a phased approach to the implementation of this scheme?

2. Does the PCC support the redevelopment of the crypt as the next stage in this phased approach?

There was discussion around the Crypt being structurally essential and the amount the Crypt is used during the week. It was seen as being an achievable project with the ability to raise sufficient money to do the works crypt – although unable to say at present as no costings. If seeking grants then a worked up scheme is needed.

Proposed by Derek Hadden, seconded by Mark Orriss, carried unanimously. AGREED

3. Does the PCC support the re-formation of a RENEW team to spearhead this project?

Proposed by Val Moore, seconded by Catherine Simmonds, carried unanimously. AGREED

It was agreed that getting the right people involved in the RENEW team was key. A meeting will need to take place in the short term with the Architects. The RENEW Team needs a chair from the membership of PCC but this does not need to be a professional builder/architect etc.

Agreed next steps were:-

- Identify a possible Chairperson from within the PCC; members were encouraged to take time to pray and reflect and send offers or names to Mark Parsons or Paul Langham.
- Team members to be recruited – announcement to church family etc. – need people with passion and the right set of skills.
- Come back to June PCC meeting with name of Chair/potential members. It was noted that a meeting will be needed with the architects so that we can speak to church family etc. once a timescale and possible funding needs are identified.
- Terms of Reference – who will put these together? There is a basis in place (part of Leightons work) that we can use that to start

13.00 Lunch break

14.00 'Listening in Creation'

Jill Garfitt led a time for people to break out to listen to God in creation. Members were encouraged to discern what their attention was drawn to. Where do we need to pay attention to what God is doing...? In Jeremiah ch 1 God asks "what do you see?"

Themes of where God is taking us personally or corporately were shared afterwards.

- *Drawn to the "incomplete" part of the garden. Evidence of work has been done before and stuff ready to be used....prep area? Compost heap doesn't look pretty or smell pretty. Larger church wants to get on and start using the compost but it takes time and cannot be rushed. Bees flying, apples falling – not yet ripe.. things going on under the surface but God sees it all. Laburnum under the tree loads of snails high up...not expecting to see them there. How long did it take to get there/had goal in mind... Going to be a long journey and not easy. Rolls of turf not laid and have died....been left to wither and go brown...don't let plans die or go to waste through inaction.*
- *Cone with sign...drain cover circular sign line going through it...memorial with lines going through (stop sign). Last couple of weeks – personal journey "stop" or is it "rest" may be bit of both. Leadership spent a lot of time talking about doing things but is it time to stop and rest in the Lord/discern what God is wanting?*
- *Didn't feel led to anything particular. Growing sense of being overwhelmed uncomfortable and burdened. God come to us and rests. Reminded are we self-reliant of God-reliant? If feeling overwhelmed is it because we are self-reliant?*

- *Network of roads and footpaths...can go places directly. If paying attention can find the narrow path/straight way Proverbs 3:6 "Trust in the Lord...." Get wrapped up in trying to understand all the arguments and being swayed one way or other. Resting in God and trusting in God will bring clarity.*
- *Cemetery –saw a number of stone crosses that have been laid against the headstone. Difficult to put the crosses back where they were (faculty and expense) but to simply lean them against what is already there is simple. Over-complication? Simplify?*
- *Tale of 4 gardens.*
 - *Been beautiful at borders weeds, flowers ... started to mow lawn but amongst weeds*
 - *Been completely paved over - no life*
 - *Just grass nicely cut*
 - *Beautiful Garden – kept lovely*
- *Potential of those in transit*
- *CC because of heritage could have b=word and spirit and build on what is there already*
- *Churchyard some stones but been put back together crosses laid inside each other Door and the stone around it balustrade supporting building small arches within. Protection and overarching....? Cards on sale with arch "blessing"....?*
- *Pass the wedding – beautiful. 1 level the water into wine/generosity. Met Graham – wearing kilts – different clans represented. All celebrating*
- *Walked around area of tunnelled tree lined path – got to end "have land" perhaps means "had lands" God having a clear path for us to follow*
- *Came in door – PCC sign male symbol - is this about the right amount of women in PCC – equal leadership.*
- *Church – heard choir singing. This place has been made of God and it is beyond reproach. When RENEW is finished, people will have a sense this is something that God has done, beyond reproach.*
- *Old Church Road – which road are we taking? are we moving forward?*
- *Spy passage with old wall – patched. Looked like it would lead somewhere interesting...came into a bland housing area with someone using a hedge trimmer. Municipal barrier on way back...what look like ancient old heritage led to nowhere.....*
- *Lots of people – persistent tweeting of bird,,,looked around bird on telegraph pole bird then took off and flew – disappeared. Kept being drawn to the trees*
- *Need to be listening to the persistent bird....*
- *Trees been stumped down – lots of growth coming out of. One other side that looks healthy didn't notice the first one once looked at the second one.*
- *Solar panel- how we need to absorb God's light. How the more cells there are, the stronger the energy produced which can be used. Produce light and shine out. Individually we can go dim, - church needs to absorb God's light.*
- *Home Group recently shared testimonies – some shared things that ha been painful. Lots going on in the world, we know a God who can do something about it. Lots of different houses and then an estate where they all looked the same. Enjoy breadth and diversity*
- *Drawn to the choir singing - they sounded like angels singing reminded of sermon about when people turn to God the angels celebrate. All we are doing is all about people – those out there!*
- *Watching Postman Pat with children – images presented to children – whole community is here...church gave money to help develop the Tithe Barn. Wedding took place in the Tithe Barn but not in the church? Community has lost identity of church? Churchyard – yew tree with another tree growing in the middle with an iron band....not sure what it means.*

- *Wedding – loss of relevancy. Church in today’s society.*
- *Women - lunchtime group of men meeting to do a “mens thing”? Clearly not how we function but thought was there....*

Jill reflected that we had heard lots of things – the group then tried to draw themes together:-

- *Persistence*
- *Slowing down to hear what God is saying*
- *Shouldn’t be strangled – tree sprouting – chopped back doesn’t stop shoots coming...nothing stopping use growing/moving forward*
- *Simplicity – not over-complicating things*
- *Birdsong – paying attention to new growth*
- *Absorbing light – for community. Church to provide space for society to slow down and have space... need to enable. Are we providing?*
- *Wedding outside of the church – we provide ?*
- *Clarity in things that may seem complicated –*
- *Garden space – are we prepared to put the work in?*
- *Look to see things under the surface – need to get up close...are we looking and seeing what is REALLY happening. God sees the things we don’t see. God sees the bigger picture. Don’t overcomplicate my truth with human over-thinking. Can’t see the end thing yet but we can.*
- *Overarching – youth work?/ Christians in preparation.*
- *Responsibility to and potential in all ages....Gardeners? who are the designers?– who are the plants?*
- *Are there things we need to do in ourselves (the compost?). Links with solar cells get dirty and need cleaning up*
- *People matter....*

14.45 ‘Listening to each other’ & principles of discernment and testing

During this section time was taken to stop, notice and where we are seeing God at work in Christ Church. There are clues that are happening in the life of the church that indicates that are shifts and directional changes that are living out our vision or indicating where God wants the vision to go. An example of this is the church becoming a community space with the coffee shop and memory cafe or doubling of numbers attending the Tuesday community (20s and 30s) and the desire for encounter and discipleship. All of us, through our own filters will be seeing different things and this will be an opportunity to share and discern where God is creating a stir and, if time, to look 5-10 years out at the bigger dots on the horizon that He might be planting in our hearts and minds.

Members were asked to split into groups and share what they believe were clues as to where God has been at work? The groups then fed back:- (numbers x indicate where similar comments were shared)

- *Response to Kingdom Living course*
- *Prayer Ministry a big feature at 5 – willing to engage. How could we have more at 10 – how to support each other when encountering God x 3*
- *Reaching Christ through creativeness*
- *Collaboration with other churches*
- *New people coming in – cross cultures and diversity x 2*
- *Signs of spiritual growth in older people – testimony x 3*
- *Connecting more mature with rising generation x 2*
- *Growth in PCC – unity/common vision/ wider age range/ spiritual awareness*
- *8 – numbers and reflective opportunities*
- *Growth at 11 midweek service*
- *Hunger for discipleship x 2*

- *Growth in older and younger – gaps in middle aged....demographic (40's/50's/60's lost in new CC) need to reach out to them – been involved in the past and are trying to find their way. RENEW – opportunities – uncomfortable with changes – they are part of the family. When people have moved to church plants and they may not have been replaced. – item on PCC Agenda...leadership recognises problem; gives guidance and want to empower to*
- *20's and 30s group have done well in welcoming others in a discipling role. Chris Whitwell may have insights that will help.*
- *How to energise older people who may not feel they have a role “honorary grandparents/ parents” – how do they interact.*
- *Lots of applicants for recent roles*
- *Hunger for studying Scripture*
- *Easter eggs and going out into village – mostly done by people not done before*
- *Coffee Shop – opportunity of place to meet*
- *Mission Partners work they are doing*
- *Safeguarding and pastoral care...God is at work*
- *In our workplaces.....?*
- *Whole church seems to be engaged and more together....*
- *JG noted that at PCC retreat last year – refugees in Linden Gate – has happened*

JG advised that the meeting had been taken in a different way in terms of the agenda. The meeting were asked what they felt had been put in place as principles:-

- *Spent time in scripture*
- *Spent time reflecting and discussing*
- *Good to be away in a different environment*
- *Looked at themes/what is speaking to lots of people*
- *Repetition of themes*
- *Need to be “in the zone through worship/song/prayer/silence*
- *Sense not a fixed agenda in things discussed. We therefore don't bring our own issues so more Christ-focussed rather than our own viewpoints...how do we lay down our own preferences (indifference, trust and wisdom)*
- *Decisions made more easily having done the discernment – combined discernment with “common sense” How can we do that when we meet for shorter times...?*
- *Good to have time to reflect personally in advance of meetings...better place for discussion.*
- *Fear – not been evident today – gives feeling of being able to say what we can*
- *Need to be disciplined*
- *Can we feedback the good things about today to the church family? Can the SC can come back with potential agenda items and items for feedback....*

16.15 AOB

Mark Parsons asked if a member felt they could write some words of personal reflection of today that can go into the weekly email to the Church Family. Kevin Stone kindly offered to do so. It was noted that the Annual Report gives an overview of the church activities etc. and that the approved PCC Minutes are available on the website. It was noted that there are reasons for the delay in getting approved minutes onto the website so perhaps a “Summary of PCC decisions” could be collated in the short term.

The meeting discussed what sort of level of detail they require in the minutes. It was noted that strategic meeting involve thoughts and reflections and that is it not possible to record all that is said. MP reflected that when spending time going back through PCC minutes it is not always easy to discern what has been

decided. The John Truscott report promotes the idea of minutes being an overview of discussions rather than a highly detailed account of what was said and by whom etc. We try to follow this recommendation as much as possible. No names appear in our minutes except for those who lead an item, unless specifically required.

PL proposed that we seek to move to 1 page summary of PCC meetings from this point on whilst allowing for those from within the church family who want to go deeper being able to see the minutes if required. It was noted that some items are confidential (items around salaries etc.)

Electing PCC officers (Lay Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Electoral Roll Officer)

- Lay Chair – more active to allow clergy to speak in debate. More thought and suggestions to come to future meetings. Needs to be part of the Standing Committee in order to know what is going on.
- Secretary – *Rosemarie Hall is currently in the role and is willing to continue.*
Proposed by Graham Stuart, seconded= by Sara Wadsworth, carried unanimously.
- Treasurer – hope to be able to identify someone to fill the role or Treasurer- more information in due course
- Electoral Roll Officer – *currently Mark Parsons.*
The meeting were in favour of Mark continuing in this role.
- Electing a member to the Standing Committee. The meeting were reminded that the current membership includes two PCC members (Mark Orriss and Graham Stuart). It was noted that more work needs to be done about what leadership looks like and for the short term, it was agreed the current Standing Committee will continue unchanged.
- Dates for the coming year – a timetable was distributed. Dates to be confirmed at the PCC meeting in June. It will also be discussed if a whole day on the Saturdays (3 a year) is more beneficial.

Any other urgent business

Coffee Shop Manager

The meeting were advised that Hannah Bottom has been appointed as Coffee Shop Manager. A Coffee Shop Team meeting will take place to discuss ways forward.

Targets from last year' PCC Retreat

To be sent to the PCC meeting in June

Seniors Lunch

Val Moore enquired if the PCC could help with a Seniors Lunch (minimum of 4 people required) Val to send more details.

16.30 The meeting closed with a short time of prayer.