

St John's Church Egham

Minutes of PCC meeting, 4 February 2019, in church

Attendees: Rev. Esther Prior (Chair), Conrad Benefield (Secretary), Debbie Benefield, Heather Cooke, Steve Cresswell, Veronica Cresswell, Phil Darby, Emma Evans, Sarah Gillies, Phil Holloway, Sara Holloway, Joyce Johnson, Paul Kahn, Chris King, Victoria Mcharo, Keith Malcouronne, Carol Peters, Michael Senanayake, Andrew Tebboth, Sally Thompson, Natalie Watson and Geoff Wickes.

Apologies: Chris Gray, Rev. Simon Fraser, Rev. Jenn Riddlestone.

1. Opening prayer and welcome

Rev. Esther Prior welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened in prayer. Apologies for absence were received as noted above.

2. Devotional thought

Andrew Tebboth gave a devotional thought based on Luke 13:18-21 and the parables of the yeast and the mustard seed, which are both about something small having a big impact.

Andrew reflected that for St John's there were many possible meanings within these parables:

Esther as the gardener asking someone to grow a new ministry; the garden as Egham, people or situations; the birds in the branches as people in our community who feel safe and supported in their "nest" of St John's.

The yeast as God's word, able to transform a lot of flour (about 18.5kg in the parable) into dough; the yeast as us; the dough as our lives, or the situations we face. The lady making the dough as us, or the Holy Spirit.

Andrew went on to reflect on our draft values - transformational like the mustard seed or the yeast; welcoming or invitational like the tree; courageous like the lady making 18.5 kg of dough; and Christ-centredness underpinning them.

A short time of reflection and prayer followed.

3. Declaration of interests

The interests previously declared were noted. No further interests were declared.

4. Draft minutes of 26 November PCC meeting and minutes of 14 January Standing Committee meeting

The PCC minutes of 26 November were approved and the Standing Committee minutes of 14 January were noted. In matters arising, Esther confirmed that Mandie Shirnia had completed a placement at St Mary's Thorpe and wished to go forward for the selection process for training as an ordained local minister (OLM) like Rev. Simon Fraser. Esther added that Mandie had met with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, William Challis, and had his full support. Esther confirmed that the length and format of training would be determined following the selection process, if Mandie were successful.

PCC members voted unanimously in favour of endorsing Mandie's PCC would be asked to pass a resolution to support Mandie's in going forward for selection.

5. Safeguarding

Joyce Johnson, PCC Safeguarding Lead, advised that there were no safeguarding issues to report.

6. Draft mission, vision and values

Members were invited to review, in small groups, the draft mission, vision and values set out in papers 19/04 and 19/04a.

Esther summarised these as:

- Mission – what we do
- Vision – what we want to become
- Values – our DNA, what characterises the way we are and the way we do things

The following reflects the key points made in feedback and discussion.

Mission

The proposed mission was:

Love God, Love Each Other, and Love Our Community.

- Members were supportive of the draft mission, noting its positioning of love as central to what we do. They saw a clear sequence and priority (up, in, out) and that through being loved by God, and loving one another, we are equipped to share that love with others. Members felt that 'Love God' was paramount – in visual terms at the top of the 'pyramid' with 'love each other and love our community' beneath, or the central of three concentric circles.
- Members noted that the mission is echoed in John 13:34-35 ("As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.") and Acts 2:42-47: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer...and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.")
- Members noted and welcomed the connections to Scripture and further noted that the mission statement reflects both the two greatest commandments and the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations.
- Members agreed that 'community' was much wider than just the community (or communities) where we live, and extended to workplaces, schools, families and, through mission, the wider world, crossing social, cultural and faith boundaries. In other words our commitment was to taking God's love and the gospel to wherever people are – physically, spiritually and emotionally.

Members voted unanimously in favour of adopting the mission statement as drafted.

Vision

The proposed vision was:

Advance God's kingdom here in Egham; to be equipped to love and serve our community, where people can grow, flourish, and encounter God. Together, we worship, we pray, we study the bible and support each other. Our church, our centre, and our grounds are being used to the full. We are relevant to all, including the young, old, and marginalized. Alive and exciting, we are involved in a huge number of things in our community, Christ's love shining through.

- Members were generally supportive of the vision statement and saw a strong relationship to the mission statement. They also noted how the first sentence of the vision summarises the rest. However, members proposed reviewing some specific wording:

- 'Grow God's kingdom' rather than 'advance the kingdom' – while 'advance' conveys confidence and ambition, it might come across as aggressive or militaristic.
- The vision should be more about how our resources as a church are used, rather than the extent to which our buildings are used, eg 'God uses our campus to the full'. Or it should be about more than just physical resources, in other words our people and their gifts as well, ie 'our resources and talents are used to the full'.
- 'Marginalised' might convey a message that people are overlooked or insignificant. 'We are relevant to everyone without exception' might be better.
- 'We are involved in a huge number of things in our community' might be better phrased as '...with our community' or 'We are known and connected in the community', or 'We are involved in helping many people in the community'.
- 'Christ's love shining through us' might be stronger.

Values

The proposed values were:

Invitational - Welcoming - Christ-centred - Courageous - Transformational

Members voted unanimously in favour of adopting the values.

Strapline

Esther acknowledged the work done to develop a new strapline for St John's and advised that James Hammerstein, who was starting to develop a new logo, had suggested the strapline "Experience Hope".

Members discussed this proposed strapline in depth and agreed to adopt it.

7. Finance and Parish Share

Keith Malcouronne presented the revised draft accounts for 2018 (paper 19/05), noting a forecast underspend of £5,000 due to maintenance items being deferred to 2019.

Keith referred members to paper 19/05a, noting that the St John's had been paying a relatively large Parish Share and that this would decrease progressively over the next few years, having held steady for the last couple of years. He added that some smaller parishes would be significantly challenged by corresponding increases in their Parish Share.

8. Buildings maintenance

The report of the Buildings & Facilities Sub-Committee was noted.

9. Growing leaders and resourcing ministries

Esther referred members to paper 19/06. She advised that potential candidates for both Nicola Cadet de Fontenay's maternity cover and the Easter Centre Development Manager had been identified within the congregation, and that discussions were underway with the diocese regarding the latter. This post would be full-time, initially for one year, and supported with a £9,000 grant from the diocese's Growth Fund, a legacy and a pledge to cover any shortfall. Esther added that there were some conditions attached to the grant which needed to be reflected in the final role description.

In discussion, PCC members agreed that the roles should be filled but publicised within the congregation to identify any other potential candidates. It was noted that there might be the potential to provide housing for one or both roles at 33 Grange Road, with salary adjusted accordingly.

10. Forthcoming events

No forthcoming events were reported.

11. Salary review

It was noted that proposals for the 2019 salary review would come to the March PCC meeting.

There was no other business and the meeting closed in prayer at 10.00pm.