

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF LUXEMBOURG CHURCH COUNCIL

Wednesday 16 January 2013
8 pm, the Vicarage

MINUTES

Present: The Rev'd Chris Lyon, the Rev'd Andrew Markey (Assistant Chaplain), Catherine Allen (Churchwarden), Lynn Barclay, Tania Buhr (Secretary), Cheryl Fisher, Moira Hogg, John Overstall, Sarah Parkhouse (Treasurer), Neil Ross, Felix Rusere, Philippa Seymour, Chris Vaudrey (Churchwarden).

1. & 2. Welcome & Bible reading and prayer

The Chaplain, as Chairperson, opened the meeting at 8.07 pm with a reading from John I, v. 35-39, followed by a prayer.

3. Apologies

Sebastiaan Boelen, Rani Roloff.

4. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 5 December 2012 were agreed to be an accurate account of the proceedings.

A revised version of the minutes of the extra meeting of 9 January 2013 was circulated. Sarah Parkhouse thought that the point she had raised about seeking further tax advice should be added to the revised version.

5. Action Points Review and Matters arising

Action points review:

See separate Action points spreadsheet.

Matters arising:

a) Administrative issues

The Ministère des Cultes had received all the documentation concerning the Rev'd Andrew Markey's employment situation and his dossier was in the process of being regularised. His salary would start to be paid shortly.

b) Legal pastoral issues

As regards the issue discussed at the meeting of 5 December 2012, the Chaplain reported that no further action had been taken by the group concerned with this issue. He had, however, received a positive oral response to his e-mail from the church member who had raised the question with him.

New action points:

- Cheryl Fisher to talk to Dana about finding out from the Luxembourg authorities about the legal and financial issues involved in her obtaining a

- work permit, and to talk to Edward Seymour about the “angels” donations.
- the Chaplain to approach Ralph Birch about becoming this year’s Church Fair organiser.

6. Ministry Report

The Chaplain reported on several matters:

- a) Christmas services and events: the Christingle service on Christmas Eve had been well attended, with a collection totalling 881 €, but the Chaplain had fallen ill afterwards and the Assistant Chaplain had had to step in at short notice to preach at the Midnight service on Christmas Eve and the Christmas Day service. After his holiday the Chaplain had been on sick leave for a week. He thanked Andy Markey for holding the fort during his illness.
John Overstall raised the point that the sidespersons’ rota needed to make provision for services falling on weekdays, as no readers had been designated for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.
- b) Susan Bolen: As part of her ordinand training, she was leading the first part of the service once a month and would preach once every two months.
- c) Article in the *Wort* and preaching at the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: The Chaplain circulated his article, “Jesus’s example – bending the light of tradition to illuminate the modern world”, published in the *Wort* on 12 January 2013; it would be posted on the Church’s website. It was about challenging the current way of thinking. By reinterpreting tradition, a fresh understanding of the Scriptures could be gained.
The Chaplain would be preaching on Sunday 20 January in the Bel-Air church as part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.
- d) Child protection/safeguarding training: a course had been scheduled for 12 January 2013 but had not taken place, owing to the lack of response from the congregation.

7. Sunday School/Club

Two issues were discussed: the proposal by Caroline Kafka-Markey to change the name to Sunday Club and the question of how to do the Sunday School/Club rota. Chris Vaudrey pointed out that as all the church literature and the website would thus need to be amended, any change in this activity’s name would have to be made for a considerable period of time. After some discussion it was agreed to change the name to Sunday Club.

The current arrangement for the rota was that Sunday School leaders and helpers signed up for the dates for which they were available on an open calendar in Google. Philippa Seymour said this arrangement was not working well as there were gaps and cover often had to be arranged at the last minute; Chris Vaudrey said there were problems with keeping the rota data on the website up to date. The Chaplain wanted the present system to revert back to a traditional rota as soon as possible and asked the Assistant Chaplain to arrange for this.

8. Lent Study Groups

Arrangements for the Lent study groups were still being decided but they would be run by the Assistant Chaplain.

9. Phil Harvey - postulant

Phil Harvey, who was interested in becoming ordained, would shortly be attending a conference in this connection. We as a church would at some stage have to vote our support for this “exploration of ministry” by a member of our congregation. To enable us to have an idea of his suitability for becoming a priest, he would in future be becoming involved in doing things in church, i.e. involvement in the Lenten study groups and preaching.

10. Music Director

The Chaplain explained that, as we had come to the end of the current arrangements for financing the post of Music Director (occupied by Dana Luccock), we needed to decide how to proceed. He circulated the e-mail Dana Luccock had written describing the hours she currently worked in this post (i.e. eight) and what she would be able to do if she were paid to do more hours. He wanted this issue to be explored further so that the expenditure could be budgeted. If we wanted her to continue in this post we had to ensure that she was able to obtain her work permit. Cheryl Fisher pointed out that Dana needed to find out from the Luxembourg authorities exactly what criteria she had to fulfil to obtain a work permit.

Action point: Cheryl Fisher to talk to Dana about finding out from the Luxembourg authorities about the legal and financial issues involved in her obtaining a work permit.

11. AGM date

The AGM would be held on Tuesday 9 April 2013 at 8 pm at the Soeurs Franciscaines, 50 avenue Gaston Diderich in Luxembourg.

12. Pastoral Strategy - Area Contact Groups – role of electoral members of the Church Council

The Chaplain reported that, although Lynn Barclay had put great effort into getting the Area Contact Groups up and running again, this had largely been in vain, as few hosts/contact persons had responded and were willing to continue in their role. Lynn Barclay had suggested circulating the contact list amongst the Council to try to establish which of the people on the list were still in Luxembourg.

The Chaplain suggested taking a strategic approach. It was very important that we knew who was in the congregation and that we as a congregation knew each other; this he saw as one of the responsibilities of Church Council members. There were approx. 360 names on the contact register, which needed revising; the electoral roll, which only comprised 165 names, was required to be revised before the AGM. He suggested sending out paper forms by post for people to re-enrol on the electoral roll and to fill out the contact list. Both forms needed to be completed and it would be helpful to have the maximum possible information via the contact form. It would be

important to explain why these forms were needed and to chase up people who had not filled them in. Philippa Seymour suggested that sidespeople could also hand out the forms at the end of the service when people were returning their books. The Chaplain said this issue would need to be pushed at the end of January and early February in order to get the electoral roll closed before Holy Week.

Once the registers and lists were completed and we knew where the members of the congregation were living; it would then be possible to divide up Luxembourg into six large areas with around 50-60 people, and then subdivide those into three smaller areas of 20 people or so. Effective meetings needed about 10 people, i.e. about 50% of those who would be invited in each sub-area. Bearing in mind the aim of being more effective in communication and pastoral contact, the Chaplain proposed that each large group have a Church Council member assigned to it; that person would relate to Area Hosts and Area Contact people. Anyone standing for election to the Council would thus be assigned to an area and be expected to have a meeting with the people in that area once a year. Andrew Markey could then develop house groups in each area. The Chaplain hoped that this arrangement would give the Church new impetus. He asked whether the Council considered that the idea of creating six areas and assigning a Church Council member to each one was a good idea to be explored further. The Council approved of the idea.

13. Revision of the Electoral Roll

This item was discussed in conjunction with item 12.

14. Stationery

Chris Vaudrey reported that he and Philippa Seymour had simplified the pink electoral roll form and would soon finish revising the blue contact form. Both forms could then be reprinted.

15. Church Fair

The date for the 2013 Church Fair was confirmed as 16 June 2013, but an organiser still needed to be found.

Action point: The Chaplain to approach Ralph Birch about this.

16. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Sarah Parkhouse, submitted the accounts for December 2012. Income for the month was as expected with the overall result for the year consistent in that monthly donations had decreased. The figure for grants and donations would be nearer to the budget once the grant of 2 480 € received from the State in January had been included. The Vicarage Fund included 22 200 € transferred from the ASBL bank account. In connection with closing that account, she had sent a registered letter to the last remaining donor and had received back the signed slip indicating that the letter had been delivered to the person concerned.

The costs for the month were as expected. Cash advances to Andrew Markey would be recouped once the Luxembourg government had started paying his salary. The Bishop's Appeal had raised 1 441 €. Charity payments of around 4 000 € included the 3 000 € for Christian Aid and discretionary payments made by the Chaplain.

She said that the year-end financial statements were being prepared and she had arranged a meeting with the auditor the following week to start the audit process.

The Chaplain thanked the Treasurer for her report.

Cheryl Fisher said she wanted at some point to have a discussion about the size of the Church's cash holdings.

17. Property issues – possible sale of the Vicarage

The Chaplain reported that he had contacted company X to tell them that we wanted to follow up their offer and continue negotiation. Another firm had been suggested to the Church, but the Chaplain and the churchwardens had taken the view that a decision to follow up with company X had been taken and should be pursued. He would inform the representative of the other firm that it had not been chosen.

The Chaplain asked the Council whether there were any questions or issues they wished to have addressed with company X. Philippa Seymour thought that it was important to get company X to answer all the points in the Church's original paper. Sarah Parkhouse said that before proceeding with negotiations we needed to know the cost to us (e.g. the VAT percentage) so that we could budget. Written tax advice needed to be obtained from an expert, who could be sued if the advice proved to be incorrect. Felix Rusere said we needed to know how the tax, fees and the rental costs payable would combine so that we could work out our bottom line.

The Chaplain asked if anyone else wanted to be part of the working group pursuing the negotiations and Neil Ross volunteered. In order to obtain the outside expertise (concerning tax and legal issues) we needed, said the Chaplain, we could consult a chartered surveyor working as an advisor for a property company, or we could ask Dennis Robertson's contact person. Neil Ross suggested that his contact would be good as a first port of call. The Chaplain explained that we would have to pay the property firm for any advice we received from the chartered surveyor or anyone else, with the fee being a percentage of the total transaction. He asked Neil Ross to find out what percentage we would have to expect to pay for advice.

Sarah Parkhouse asked whether the Church was planning to ask a project manager to organise matters, such as selecting the fittings and monitoring overruns. When asked, she said she would be willing to act as a consultant in this respect and would be prepared to find out some possible typical "cahiers de charges" for similar apartments.

The Chaplain said it would be useful if Council members could e-mail him any

specific questions they wanted put to company X.

18. Any other business

Date for Waldbillig church choir to sing at one of our services: Henry Wickens had spoken to Dana Luccock about this and the date of either the third Sunday in April or the third Sunday in May would be confirmed shortly.

19. Dates of next meetings

The dates for the next meetings were confirmed as:

Wednesday 20 February 2013 and **Tuesday 12 March 2013**.

The AGM would be held on **Tuesday 9 April 2013**.

20. Closing prayer

The meeting closed with a prayer at 11.12 pm.