

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF LUXEMBOURG

CHURCH COUNCIL

Wednesday 11 May 2016
7.30 pm, Centre Jean XXIII, 52 rue Jules Wilhelm, L-2728 Luxembourg

MINUTES

Present: The Rev'd Chris Lyon (Chaplain), the Rev'd Andy Markey (Assistant Chaplain), Lynn Barclay, Tania Buhr (Secretary), Gabriel Chelladurai, John Dimond, Moira Hogg, Simon Norcross (Churchwarden), John Overstall, Isabel Page, Philippa Seymour (Churchwarden), and Chris Vaudrey (Treasurer)

1. & 2. Welcome & Bible reading and prayer

The Chaplain, as Chairperson, opened the meeting at 7.55 pm by welcoming Gabriel Chelladurai, who was attending his first meeting after having been elected as a Council member at the AGM on 20 April 2016. He read from Isaiah 40, v. 27-31 and said a prayer.

3. Apologies for absence - Gerd Gebhard, Catriona Gillham and Victoria Hodgson.

4. Minutes of last meeting (13 April 2016)

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2016 were agreed to be an accurate account of the proceedings, subject to the following rewording:

- item 6c, 'First Sunday Group', first line to read: 'at the last service ...';
- item 11, 'Environmental Policy', second and third sentences to read: '... she and Simon Norcross had thought our Church needed some form of written policy. After some discussion as to the exact wording, the Council agreed on the following text, based on their proposal';
- point 2 of the Environmental Stewardship Policy to read: 'to use as little energy as possible in any buildings the Church owns or uses';
- item 12, 'Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC)', third paragraph to read: 'Philippa Seymour agreed these were good ideas but nevertheless wanted to point out that the word 'charity' should not be denigrated, as big organisations such as Oxfam and ActionAid had decades ago abandoned the 'top down' approach to charity and sought to work with, rather than for, recipients.'

5. Action Points Review and Matters Arising

Action points review: the Advent service booklets had been printed; the Chaplain had spoken to the Charities Committee.

Matters Arising: the Chaplain had met with the Vicar-General, Leo Wagener, on 28 April to discuss the Konvikt building and the stair carpet. The Vicar-General had given him an address to contact about the carpet and the Chaplain would speak to that person.

6. Ministry Report

The Chaplain reported as follows:

- a) Processes and procedures: nothing to report;
- b) Newcomers – linking JC forms to contact forms: nothing to report;
- c) First Sunday Group: at the last service, the projector had worked, and hymn sheet hand-outs had been available;
- d) Crèche and Junior Church recruitment: this was a priority matter;

- e) Ascension Day walk: the walk on 5 May had been attended by 44 people; the Chaplain thanked the Seymours for hosting this successful event;
- f) Confirmation: the Bishop would confirm a few candidates on 23 October 2016.

7. Te Deum on Sunday 26 June 2016 at 6.30 pm in the Konvikt Chapel

The Chaplain explained that this was to be a Te Deum for the Grand Duke, to which representatives of the Luxembourg Government and the Ville de Luxembourg, including the mayor, would be invited. The choir would sing Handel's Dettingen Te Deum, with the support of some professional musicians, and Jean Origer would play the organ. It would also be an occasion to put ourselves on the map and to raise the flag for the UK following the Brexit referendum on 23 June. He was hoping for a good congregation. Refreshments would be served afterwards in the hall. The collection would go to our Bishop's appeal for work with unaccompanied minors arriving in the EU as refugees. The Council agreed to the expenditure involved (around €2 500 for the professional musicians, plus the rent of the hall and the cost of the refreshments).

8. Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

The Chaplain had taken a slightly amended version of his paper 'From raising money for charity to working with others for a fair, sustainable world' (circulated in its original form at the previous Council meeting) to his meeting with the Charities Committee. He had added two sections to the paper, one about 'being the church' and the theological background to it, and the other suggesting a 'route planner' for implementing his proposals. These would be discussed in small groups at the congregational meeting to be held on 25 May 2016 and we would take note of the ideas and priorities expressed; those who seemed most interested would be invited to participate in one of the three groups; before the summer break or in the autumn, members of these groups would meet to share their plans for the next 12 months; next Advent, Lent or post-Easter, another congregational evening would be organised by the JPIC group to present our concerns, priorities and actions at that time; this would become a regular meeting and this would be where congregational proposals for giving plans would be expressed; this regular event would be open to non-church members, and we might invite groups with whom we were in sympathy to join us and perhaps make a presentation.

He said the Charities Committee was doing a very professional job. Its activities would not necessarily change as a result of these proposals, but as the new JPIC group became established, its concerns might shape the criteria used to determine grants. Recruitment of new members to the Charities Committee should be done after the 25 May meeting.

The Charities Committee took on board his paper, and was keen for there to be more communication.

9. Congregational meeting

A meeting would be held at the Centre Jean XXIII on Wednesday 25 May 2016 at 7.30 pm to discuss future activities. The plan was for small groups to discuss three issues: the JPIC idea, the Church Fair tradition and crèche and Junior Church leadership. Refreshments would be provided. A congregational e-mail would be sent out.

10. Treasurer's Report

Chris Vaudrey, as acting Treasurer, presented a receipts and payments account for January to April 2016. This showed a net shortfall of €28 374, with the main bank account standing at €1 514. Whilst donations and collections were in line with the budget, we had spent more than we usually did, on account of buying furniture for the Chaplain's flat, making loan interest payments, paying the Music Director's fees, higher employment costs and having to pay accommodation costs (for Centre Jean XXIII). Some of these items were one-off

expenses. The situation looked rather alarming, but things would be clearer once we knew how much we would get from the sale of the Vicarage.

The Chaplain said that the Church was currently cushioned from reality, insofar as the State was paying the clergy's stipends; however, once he and the Assistant Chaplain had left, the State would no longer pay a stipend but would give the congregation a sum of money to run the Church. Church giving had not risen since 2005, as the congregation had not seen a need to increase its giving. As regards encouraging people to give more, in his view the best approach was to determine our vision and our mission clearly and then the money would flow. We should make some money on the property deals, and, once the property situation was settled, there should not be any big repair costs to pay. He considered that it would be better not to leverage the property, by taking out a mortgage on it, but to pay for it upfront, so that the financial situation was clearer and easier to understand.

The Council accepted the Treasurer's report.

11. Extraordinary AGM

The Chaplain and Chris Vaudrey would provide the auditor with some documents he had requested. The Extraordinary AGM was to be held on 29 May 2016 after the 11 am service.

12. Search for a new Treasurer

Chris Vaudrey said that he was continuing to act as Treasurer for the time being, until a solution was found. The '*fiduciaire*' dealing with our payroll matters had been asked to provide an estimate of what it would charge to handle our day-to-day transactions and keep the accounts. In his view, it would be administratively heavy to employ a '*fiduciaire*', and it would still be necessary to have someone to act as the interface.

The Chaplain explained that a number of people had been approached about taking on the job of Treasurer, but all had refused. He felt that we should explore the idea of employing a '*fiduciaire*' to handle some of the work and to have a Treasurer oversee it.

13. New premises - update

a) dismantling/recycling of the Vicarage: this was ongoing;
b) Jules Mersch flat: we were moving towards signing the deal;
c) Sale of the Vicarage: a date for signing the '*acte définitif*' had still not been scheduled; a meeting concerning the price was to take place with the developers on 12 May; we expected to receive at least €100 000 more than our previous estimated maximum figure of €1.25 million, but we would be negotiating for a further increase according to the formula established in the '*compromis de vente*'. The price would depend on the exact area specified in the '*cadastre vertical*', as decided by the Ville de Luxembourg. After a lengthy discussion about the best approach to adopt at that meeting, it was decided that our bottom line would be a price of €1.5 million or else we would walk away from the deal, and we were seeking to claim back interest of €12 000 that we had had to pay on our bridging loan, taken out on account of the delay in the deal.

14. Any other business – None.

15. Dates of future meetings

Council meetings: Wednesday 8 June 2016 at 7.30 pm (7 pm for food beforehand);
Wednesday 6 July 2016;
Wednesday 14 September 2016.

Other meetings: Congregational meeting: 25 May 2016, 7.30 pm, Centre Jean XXIII;
Anglican Te Deum: Sunday 26 June 2016, 6.30 pm, Konvikt Chapel.

16. Closing prayer

The Chaplain thanked Moira Hogg for providing the food and closed the meeting with a prayer at 10.50 pm.