

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF LUXEMBOURG

CHURCH COUNCIL

Tuesday 14 March 2017
7.30 pm, Centre Jean XXIII, 52 rue Jules Wilhelm, L-2728 Luxembourg

MINUTES

Present: The Venerable Dr Paul Vrolijk (Archdeacon), Lynn Barclay, Tania Buhr (Secretary), Gabriel Chelladurai, John Dimond, Gerd Gebhard, Catriona Gillham, Victoria Hodgson, Moira Hogg, Simon Norcross (Churchwarden), Isabel Page, Philippa Seymour (Churchwarden), Evelyn Sweerts (Lay Pastoral Assistant) and Chris Vaudrey (Treasurer).

1. & 2. Welcome & Bible reading and prayer

The Churchwardens welcomed the Venerable Dr Paul Vrolijk, who had agreed to chair the meeting. He opened the meeting at 7.40 pm with a reading from Psalm 127 and a prayer.

3. Apologies for absence – John Overstall

4. Approval of Minutes of last meeting (8 February 2017)

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2017 were agreed to be an accurate account of the proceedings.

5. Action Points Review and Matters Arising

Action Points Review: for the action point regarding data protection, 'pending new legislation' should be entered under 'By when';

Matters arising: None.

6. Lay Pastoral Assistant's contract

The draft employment contract for Evelyn Sweerts as lay pastoral assistant had been discussed at length at the previous meeting and a revised draft had been circulated to Council members before this meeting. In the light of comments e-mailed by John Overstall concerning the calculation of expenses, it was agreed that the revised contract should state that expenses would be 'paid in line with Chaplaincy policy'; it was also decided that the contract would state that Evelyn would not have a vote on the Council 'unless commissioned by the Bishop'; Philippa Seymour said that if the contract were approved by the Council, she would ask the Archdeacon to ask the Bishop to commission Evelyn Sweerts accordingly.

On a proposal from Simon Norcross, the Council agreed unanimously to accept the draft contract for Evelyn Sweerts as discussed and amended.

7. Churchwardens' Report

The Churchwardens reported as follows:

a) The Chaplain's retirement

i) *Farewell service and reception at Cents church:* the service had gone well, with many people, including ambassadors, in attendance; the choir had been on good form, and Jean Ehret's words to Chris Lyon had been very welcome;

ii) *Leaving present:* the two books had been much appreciated, as had the money to buy a camera;

b) Setting up for services: no problems encountered so far;

c) Locum arrangements: locum cover had been arranged almost continuously until November 2017;

i) *services*: there had been two locums so far and the services had gone well;

ii) *flat*: thanks to the hard work of Victoria Hodgson and Lynn Barclay, the clergy flat had been cleaned and painted and the new furniture installed in time for the first locum to move in; Wifi, a phone connection and a laptop had been arranged, and an inventory had been carried out;

iii) *e-mail address for locums and future Chaplain*: security for the e-mail address was discussed; also, Chris Lyon's anglican.lu e-mail address would be closed down, so the question of whether an automatic response needed to be arranged should be talked over with him;

iv) *purchase of a car for locums and future Chaplain*: a second-hand car had been purchased, it still needed to go through Sandweiler and be insured;

d) Progress with Flat 007, Residence Isatis: the flat was due to be ready by July 2017; some fixtures and fittings decisions were taken (cost of €4 500); although the flat had originally been purchased for use as an office, the Church Office was currently well accommodated in Centre Jean XXIII, so the Churchwardens felt that the flat could be rented out, and could at a later stage be used for clergy residence or as an office, as need be; this could be discussed later;

e) Intercessors rota: Carol Birch had agreed to take over from Phil Harvey.

8. Recruitment of next Chaplain

Paul Vrolijk explained that he was responsible for the process of appointing a new Chaplain, whilst the Area Dean, Stephen Murray, was in charge of locum arrangements during the interregnum. He pointed out that the appointment process was an opportunity to reflect, pray and talk together. It involved drawing up an information pack (a parish profile and a person specification), advertising the post (in the Church Times), receiving applications, shortlisting and then interviewing candidates, and finally appointing a new Chaplain. Bishop Robert wanted the process to be transparent. Two parish representatives were needed to be on the selection committee: they would be involved in the shortlisting and interviewing, together with the Bishop and the Archdeacon.

Consultations needed to be held with the congregation and, if possible, other sympathisers in order to draw up the parish profile and the specification of the qualities required for the post. The Churchwardens had already circulated a questionnaire on this matter. A consultation workshop would also be held on 20 May 2017, chaired by Paul Vrolijk. Once the information pack had been prepared in the light of all these consultations, the post could be advertised in the summer, interviews could then be held in September/October 2017 with the aim of appointing someone by January/February 2018.

On a proposal by Victoria Hodgson, seconded by Chris Vaudrey, it was agreed that the Churchwardens would act as the parish representatives for this process, as they had been doing such a good job so far.

9. Treasurer's Report

Chris Vaudrey presented a receipts and payments account for January to February 2017. There was nothing new or unusual to report.

Philippa Seymour said that the Churchwardens had met with a senior government representative but it was not yet clear how much the Luxembourg government subsidy would be or when we would receive it; Chris Lyon would draft a letter to the government representative concerned regarding the payment.

10. Proposal to pay organists €75

A proposal to increase the organists' pay from €50 to €75 (the going rate) was agreed.

11. E-mail from William Gulliford (DDO for the Diocese of Europe) re contribution to Ordination Candidates Fund

The Council had been asked by William Gulliford, the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, to agree to the payment of a contribution to the Ordination Candidates Fund totalling £2 000 in financial support for the training of Phil Harvey and Evelyn Sweerts, i.e. £1 000 towards Phil Harvey's costs (£500 for 2015-2106 and £500 for 2016-2017) and £1 000 towards Evelyn Sweerts' costs (just for 2016-2017).

William Gulliford had explained that it cost about £12 000 a year to train someone non-residentially without the travel costs. Then the Diocese ran a three-year Initial Ministerial Education Programme under the Director of Ministerial Formation costing about £2 000 p.a. per curate. So chaplaincies were asked to contribute to these very significant training costs by paying £1 000 p.a. for those in non-residential training who might return to the chaplaincy and £500 p.a. for those in non-residential training who would be deployed elsewhere. Phil Harvey was in his final year and would be heading to Norwich Diocese to a curacy there in July. Evelyn Sweerts was in her first year of training and would most probably return to Luxembourg.

As the Council had already made a commitment to pay these costs when it agreed to support Phil Harvey and Evelyn Sweerts to train as ordinands, the Council agreed to pay the sum of £2 000 as detailed above.

Phil Harvey would be moving to England in June-July 2017 and we would probably be expected to pay a third of his removal costs, as we did in the case of Susan Bolen. Since that bill would arrive in the summer months when it was harder to arrange a Council meeting, the Council also agreed to authorise in advance the payment of these costs (probably in the order of £3 500); Phil Harvey would be asked to obtain several quotes for the removal costs before deciding which removal firm to use. The Diocesan Office would be asked to deal directly with the Treasurer on matters concerning ordinand support until a new Chaplain was well established.

12. Ministry report – Lay Pastoral Assistant

Evelyn Sweerts reported as follows:

- a) Admission to communion: between 5 and 8 children were interested and a preparatory meeting would be held on 26 March 2017; they would be admitted to communion on 23 April 2017 when they would be presented with a book and a certificate;
- b) First Sundays: the First Sunday Group had met to discuss practical matters to do with music and mikes, etc.
- c) Junior Church and crèche: both were in need of volunteers;
- d) Youth Group: the format until the summer had been changed slightly and would then be reviewed; a new approach was being considered; she thought it could be useful for someone to participate in the John Bell workshop in Ghent on 6 May 2017.
- e) she was looking into the idea of holding a monthly discussion of Christian classics in future.

13. Rental agreement Assistant Chaplain's house in Howald

The house owners, who had asked for repairs to be done when the house had been vacated

but did not provide an estimate of the cost, had sent a bill for €12 000. The Churchwardens would challenge this and ask for detailed, itemised invoices for the work done. They would decline to pay unless they received such invoices. They had contacted the Luxembourg consumers' union seeking advice.

14. 2017 AGM preparations and elections to the Council

Lynn Barclay said that notice of the AGM had been given on the website, in Lumen and in the pew-sheets; she would ask for the reports to be sent in. Paul Vrolijk would look into finding someone to chair the AGM. Philippa Seymour said new members needed to be elected. John Dimond, who was stepping down at the end of his three-year term of office, would be co-opted to be on the Council because of his IT expertise.

15. Communications Committee report

Philippa Seymour reported on the Committee's meeting of 6 March 2017 at which the main topics discussed were the Farewell Service and the Arts Festival, communications about locums and the recruitment of the next Chaplain, and the new laptop, phones and Wifi in the flat. It had taken some decisions about press releases, congregational e-mails and possible use of the Office 365 software (the latter was too expensive unless we were an ASBL; John Dimond was continuing to search for an affordable alternative).

16. Fun and Fundraising Committee report

Philippa Seymour reported as follows: at its meeting on 28 February 2017, the Committee had reviewed the events held so far this year, the Wine Tasting evening and the Arts Festival. In terms of the aims of these events, to have fun, raise money for good causes, involve people from outside church, and involve a wider range of people in helping with the organisation, both had been at least partly successful. Both could have been better attended, but those who did attend had enjoyed themselves, as had most of the organisers and performers. The standard of performances and the children's activities, etc. at the Arts Festival had been excellent, with many of our congregation revealing hidden talents, and the food stands had done very well. Two Luxembourgish choirs had performed, but had needed encouragement to take part in other activities. Cents church had turned out not to be a suitable venue – apart from the heating problem there was a lot of noise interference between the performance and socialising areas. It had been decided to run the event again at a similar time next year but at a different venue.

As regards future events, a volunteer was needed to coordinate the Mothering Sunday lunch. Newman Gompil had agreed to run another Treasure Hunt in September. The date for the Sports Day had been set as Sunday 18 June 2017 from 2 pm to 6 pm in the Kirchberg park by the Coque, and various ideas for activities had been discussed. The Churchwardens had visited the site on 10 March 2017 and talked to representatives of the *Fonds de Kirchberg* and the Ville de Luxembourg, who had been very helpful. It seemed it would be feasible to run this event, and the Committee would meet again on 15 March 2017 to discuss the details.

17. Ascension Day walk

Philippa Seymour pointed out that someone was needed to run the traditional Ascension Day walk on Thursday 25 May 2017.

18. Use of Cents church

We would not be moving there any time soon, but could use it occasionally, for example, for the Te Deum, which would be held on Sunday 25 June 2017, with the Venerable Dr Paul Vrolijk taking the service.

19. Any other business - none

20. Dates of future meetings

Council meetings: Wednesday 5 April 2017 at 7.30 pm (6.45 pm for food beforehand);
Wednesday 17 May 2017

Other events: Saturday 20 May 2017 – workshop for the parish profile for the
appointment of a new Chaplain ('Vision Day')
Wednesday 26 April 2017, 8 pm – **AGM**, Centre Jean XXIII, Salle des
conférences
Sunday 25 June 2017, 6.30 pm - Anglican Te Deum and *vin d'honneur*

21. Closing prayer

The Archdeacon closed the meeting with a prayer at 10.05 pm.