

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF LUXEMBOURG CHURCH COUNCIL

Wednesday 8 November 2017
7.30 pm, Centre Jean XXIII, 52 rue Jules Wilhelm, L-2728 Luxembourg

MINUTES

Present: Tania Buhr (Secretary), Gabriel Chelladurai (Treasurer), Gerd Gebhard, Victoria Hodgson, Lauren Marshall, Isabel Page, Philippa Seymour (Churchwarden) and Evelyn Sweerts (Lay Pastoral Assistant)

1. & 2. Welcome & Bible reading and prayer

Evelyn Sweerts, as Chair, opened the meeting at 7.35 pm with a reading from Hebrews 12, v. 1-3 and 12-13, and a prayer. She welcomed Lauren Marshall, newly co-opted onto the Council to serve until the next AGM. Tristan Pâris de Bollardi re had likewise been co-opted, but was away on business.

3. Apologies for absence – Lynn Barclay, John Dimond, Moira Hogg, Simon Norcross and Tristan Pâris de Bollardi re

4. Approval of Minutes of 11 October 2017 meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2017 were agreed to be an accurate account of the proceedings, subject to amendments to items 6(i), 9 and 14.

5. Action Points Review and Matters Arising

Action Points Review: Chris Lyon's anglican.lu e-mail address had been deleted along with its contents, as had that of Andy Markey;

Matters arising: a point concerning safeguarding would be discussed at a meeting when Moira Hogg was present.

6. Churchwardens' Report

Philippa Seymour reported as follows:

- i) Recruitment of next Chaplain: the Churchwardens were still not at liberty to disclose the identity of the person to whom the Bishop had offered the job; the person had, however, accepted the offer and was in contact with the Churchwardens; the paperwork still needed to be completed before any announcement could be made;
- ii) Locum arrangements and flat: locums had been organised until mid-March 2018; nothing to report on the flat;
- iii) Convention/Luxembourg government subsidy: nothing new to report;
- iv) Rental agreement Assistant Chaplain's house in Howald: the Churchwardens, Gerd Gebhard and Isabel Page had been looking into how to proceed. It was felt preferable to first try to sort the matter out ourselves before involving a lawyer, and better at this stage to write to the landlords rather than meet with them. Simon Norcross had drafted a letter to the Thills accepting responsibility for some items of expenditure and not others and offering to settle. He considered that we should pay the amount ( 2 800) he had calculated as what we owed over and above the guarantee paid at the beginning of the tenancy and then send the letter to the Thills; Gerd Gebhard argued that the sum should not be paid until the Thills had agreed to this settlement. Evelyn Sweerts suggested asking Simon Norcross to amend the letter to that effect;
- v) Sound system: there had been some teething problems but it was hoped these could be sorted out; Nick Jones needed to give more people training in how to use it;
- vi) Remembrance Day preparations: after much discussion and reflection with Canon Philpott and Evelyn Sweerts, the Churchwardens felt that the right balance for the service had been achieved.

7. Ministry report – Lay Pastoral Assistant

Evelyn Sweerts reported as follows:

- i) the Christian Classics book group was going well with good numbers attending;
- ii) Junior Church: she had bought 'Children's spirituality' for the JC leaders; more JC social events were being planned to help relations with children and parents; she had some guides for doing more at home during Advent and Lent; she would have a meeting with Joanne Smith and Nik Legge about preparing older children for going to university (this followed on from contact with the 'Escape and Pray' team from the Fusion Movement);
- iii) intercessors' training: this had been given by Evelyn Sweerts and Carol Birch for 12 participants;
- iv) schools work: she had given a talk about the life of a priest at a careers day at the Schengen lycée and would also be going to the European School to speak about her faith and Anglicanism, and was hoping to go to St George's and Luxembourg schools too;
- v) Prayers for the Chaplaincy: this would start on 26 November 2017 at 10 am in the crèche room and thereafter on the last Sunday of each month; issues to pray for could be passed on to Carol Birch; Council support for this initiative was encouraged;
- vi) special services: arrangements were in hand for the Iona service of healing to be held on 22 November, and for the 'Blue Christmas' service on 21 December 2017; refreshments would be offered at the latter;
- vii) possible Lent course: she asked Council whether they thought a course should be offered and if so whether she should do it; there was some discussion about involving the locums and about the venue;
- viii) agreed hours: Evelyn Sweerts pointed out, for the record, that she had recently been doing well beyond her agreed hours, having worked 7 consecutive Sundays; Isabel Page advised her to keep a record of her hours.

8. Treasurer's Report and 2018 Budget – proposals and discussion

Gabriel Chelladurai presented the receipts and payments account for January to October 2017; there had been a big increase in donations in October, and the social security authorities (CSS) had refunded the Church €1 700. However, there had also been some large items of expenditure: the contribution to the Common Fund (€8 616), the purchase of the sound system for the chapel (€1 900), expenses relating to attendance at the Synod (€300) and, in connection with recruiting the new Chaplain, the candidates' expenses and the Churchwardens' travel to Brussels. The October deficit was €4 197, with the total deficit running at €43 243.

It had now been agreed with the *fiduciaire* that they would start doing the payments and the preparation of the monthly accounts as of January 2018.

On the subject of the 2018 budget, the Treasurer thought that the Finance Committee should discuss this before the next meeting and then the Council should discuss what should be in the budget for next year. Evelyn Sweerts said she would like to see an increase in the currently very small Junior Church budget; Philippa Seymour pointed out that the Council needed to consider whether the Lumen magazine should continue to be sent as a paper version or, as in the last edition, in pdf form; Gerd Gebhard hoped that possible rental income from one of the flats and not having to pay locum expenses might help to balance the books next year.

Evelyn Sweerts asked the Council to e-mail the Churchwardens, the Treasurer and Gerd Gebhard with any suggestions regarding the budget for 2018.

9. Proposals by the Charities Committee on causes to be supported this year – discussion and adoption

('Proposed charities for 2017' paper from the Charities Committee circulated before the meeting)

Philippa Seymour had invited the Charities Committee to attend the meeting but nobody had been able to come; for 2018 a representative could attend one of the Council meetings early on in the year to discuss the charities to be chosen.

After due consideration, the Council approved the Charities Committee's list of proposed charities for 2017 and thanked the Committee for their hard work. The selected charities were the Greyton Genadendal Education Trust, South Africa; World Vision, Romania; Naledi, South Africa; COPE, Laos; Stëmm vun der Strooss, Luxembourg; and Friendship Luxembourg, Bangladesh. Philippa Seymour would invite a Charities Committee representative to the January or February 2018 Council meeting, as convenient for them.

Victoria Hodgson would like to suggest to the Charities Committee a social justice charity in India ('Daughters of Destiny') with which a friend of hers and Evelyn Sweerts' had become involved.

10. New flat in rue Jules Mersch

Nothing new to report.

11. Fun and Fundraising Group report

Philippa Seymour said that about 30 people had signed up for the wine tasting event on 11 November 2017; for the Arts Festival to be held on 4 February 2018, she would like proposals from the Council as well as offers of help.

12. Communications Committee report

Philippa Seymour reported that she had sent a note about e-mail addresses to the Communications Committee; this question was proving to be long and complicated and there were differences of opinion in the committee as to whether the use of anglican.lu addresses should be regulated and tightly controlled. For security, the password for each account needed to be notified to the Church office. At present the Church had 20 anglican.lu addresses from Visual Online, of which 8 were in use (at a cost of €31). To issue such addresses, Visual Online had to be given authority by someone; that person was currently Chris Vaudrey, but he was happy to hand it over to the Churchwardens; however, Philippa Seymour did not consider that it was good for the Churchwardens to be doing that. There was also the question of whether distributing and administering the addresses should be done by the Church office or by the webmaster. Tania Buhr requested an address as Council secretary. Evelyn Sweerts asked whether there should also be an address for prayer requests. Philippa Seymour would discuss this matter in the Communications Committee.

13. Information gathering for risk analysis

Isabel Page said she had nothing to report, as she was awaiting the model. Philippa Seymour said that the new Chaplain had been asked if they thought such an exercise would be useful and the reply had been: '... the questions we need to ask in such an exercise over a longer period will be dependent on what we begin to see once we start the strategic thinking together. If you feel there are important factors to consider now in regard to the church's current situation then please do go ahead. Some of the information gathering about geographical spread of current congregation and wider English-speaking community (future members) would be helpful to the future planning too.'

14. Any other business

- i) Victoria Hodgson had researched the cost of an artificial Christmas tree and found prices ranged between £400-600. As putting up and removing the tree had been a big organisational issue for Lynn Barclay last year, the Council considered that, although this was a lot of money to pay, it represented a worthwhile investment.
- ii) Philippa Seymour reported that Lynn Barclay had been having difficulty in booking the Salle Rheinsheim for social events, as Mr Lo Piccolo from Altrimenti seemed to think that the hall belonged to him and he was doing us a favour by letting us use it. As the Church considered that we were entitled to use it on Sundays until 2 pm, Lynn Barclay would try to establish what our position actually was.
- iii) The next meeting of Wellsprings prayer group (9 November) would be led by Rabbi Grodensky.

15. Dates of future Council meetings

- Wednesday 6 December 2017 at 7.30 pm, Centre Jean XXIII;
- Wednesday 10 January 2018;
- Monday 19 February 2018.
- **AGM** Wednesday 25 April 2018

16. Closing prayer

Evelyn Sweerts closed the meeting at 9.15 pm, the Council joining together in saying the Grace.