

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF LUXEMBOURG

CHURCH COUNCIL

Wednesday 10 January 2018
7.30 pm, Centre Jean XXIII, 52 rue Jules Wilhelm, L-2728 Luxembourg

MINUTES

Present: Lynn Barclay, Tania Buhr (Secretary), Gabriel Chelladurai (Treasurer), Gerd Gebhard, Victoria Hodgson, Lauren Marshall, Simon Norcross (Churchwarden), Isabel Page, Tristan Pâris de Bollardi re, Philippa Seymour (Churchwarden) and Evelyn Sweerts (Lay Pastoral Assistant); **guests:** the Rev'd Geoff Read (items 1-18), Marie-Louise Read (items 1-4), Martin Curwen and Jacqui Spence (Charities Committee representatives) (items 16-18).

1. & 2. Welcome & Bible reading and prayer

Simon Norcross, as Chair, opened the meeting at 7.37 pm by welcoming the new Chaplain, the Rev'd Geoff Read, and his wife, Marie-Louise. He read from Psalm 127, v. 1-2, and said the Chaplaincy prayer.

3. Apologies for absence – John Dimond and Moira Hogg

4. Brief introduction by our new Chaplain, the Rev'd Geoff Read

Both Geoff Read and his wife, Marie-Louise, gave a brief outline of their life and what had shaped their decision to apply for the post in Luxembourg. Geoff Read said he was keen to work with us to move forward. He would be taking up his duties on 1 March 2018 and taking his first service on 18 March.

5. Approval of Minutes of 6 December 2017 meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2017 were agreed to be an accurate account of the proceedings, subject to a number of amendments. The amount of the planned increase in the Common Fund would be checked.

6. Action Points Review and Matters Arising

Action Points Review: John Overstall was in favour of having a meeting with the Churchwardens to discuss storage of archives; Simon Norcross had confirmed that the Jules Mersch flat had been registered for use as an office; Lauren Marshall said dates for the meeting about the ACAT project had not yet been decided;

Matters arising: some points raised by Gerd Gebhard in an e-mail would be followed up.

7. Churchwardens' Report

The Churchwardens reported as follows:

- i) Recruitment of next Chaplain: the process was finished; Geoff Read thanked the Churchwardens for keeping him informed throughout the appointment process;
- ii) Locum arrangements and flat: locums had been organised until mid-March 2018; flat cleaning arrangements had been clarified;
- iii) Rental agreement Assistant Chaplain's house in Howald: Simon Norcross reported that the landlords, in response to the Church's offer to pay €450 by way of settlement, had said they would accept €650 as a full and final settlement. The Council agreed to pay €650 to settle the matter;
- iv) Review of Christmas services and events: as Evelyn Sweerts had had an industrial accident after the Blue Christmas service, she had been out of action for a week and so Victoria Hodgson and Lynn Barclay had stepped in to organise the Christingle service; it had been very well attended and feedback had been positive; some €700 were collected for the Children's Society; Midnight Mass had gone smoothly and the church had been full for the Christmas Day morning service; the choir concert held on 17 December 2017 had been attended by around 100 people, the music had been very good and the retiring collection had raised €850 for the Charities Fund; the room for serving the

refreshments had been too small; the Churchwardens thanked all the organisers;

v) Salle Maria Rheinsheim: on 18 December 2017, the Church had received a complaint from Mr Lo Piccolo who said the hall had been left dirty (crumbs, etc.) after we had used it; he had sent a bill for €140 for the cleaning, which had duly been paid by the Church; he also complained that his concert in the hall (the same evening as our choir concert) had been disrupted by noise. The Churchwardens would arrange another meeting with Mr Lo Piccolo;

vi) Arrangements for Transition Day (13 January 2018): about 18 participants had so far signed up for this event which would be held in the Centre Jean XXIII and led by the Rev'd Margaret Whitaker.

8. Ministry report – Lay Pastoral Assistant

Evelyn Sweerts reported as follows:

i) Accident: following the Blue Christmas service, she had fallen over a chain outside the hall and had been unconscious and concussed with a bruised face, resulting in a week's sick leave. Philippa Seymour said the chain that had caused the accident was dangerous and needed to be removed, she would bring the matter up with the Hotel Goeres or Société Lafayette (**Action point**);

ii) Special services: she thanked all those involved (especially Carol Birch and the musicians for the Iona service of healing and Carol McCarthy for the Blue Christmas service); fewer people had attended the latter service than the Iona service; she would like both services to be a regular feature in the future;

iii) the Communications team had put something on the Church's Facebook page about the upcoming Arts Festival;

iv) Youth Group: she and Nik Legge had decided not to take forward the Escape and Fusion university preparation course; confirmation might be offered next year and she would look into preparation;

v) Prayers for the Chaplaincy: a booklet had been produced; attendance had so far been small and support from the Council was requested;

vi) Lent course: a five-session course had been chosen and Philippa Seymour had offered to host it if no other venue was available; it would be held in conjunction with Father Ed on Tuesdays; she would order 12 copies of the book in advance (cost of £4.99 each) and participants would reimburse the Church;

vii) Placement: she would be away on a placement during Holy Week.

9. Treasurer's Report and approval of 2018 draft budget

Gabriel Chelladurai presented the receipts and payments account for January to December 2017; the Government subsidy of €112 318 had been received; standing orders and collections were more or less the same as the previous month.

Outgoings had included €299 for an artificial Christmas tree, and an advertisement in the BLC magazine. The surplus for the year was €48 950.

He reported that the *fiduciaire* had started to make the payments as of that month.

The Treasurer also presented the pro-forma budget for 2017-2020, as prepared by the Finance Committee. The Council approved this budget.

10. New flat in rue Jules Mersch and future policy on property

The rue Jules Mersch flat had been formally received, together with the keys. The Churchwardens had handed over the '*lettre de garantie d'achèvement*'.

The Churchwardens had contacted an agency about renting out the Jules Mersch flat and would have a meeting about this.

11. Fun and Fundraising Group report

Philippa Seymour asked Council members to advertise the Arts Festival to be held on 4 February 2018 by putting up posters; more helpers were still needed for selling tickets and other tasks. Evelyn Sweerts suggested the Telstar scouts might be able to help.

12. Communications Committee report

The Committee would be meeting the following week.

13. Safeguarding and insurance

Discussion postponed until Moira Hogg, the Safeguarding Officer, could be present.

14. ACAT interfaith human rights project

Lauren Marshall and Philippa Seymour would meet to arrange a JPIC meeting before April 2018. The date for the ACAT meeting had not yet been decided.

15. Any other business

- i) Invitation from the German Evangelical Church to a New Year reception to be held on Sunday 14 January 2018 in the morning; as nobody from the Council was free to attend, Lynn Barclay would write declining the invitation;
- ii) Term of office of Council members: the rules about the term of office had been changed about 13 years ago by the Rev'd Chris Lyon on the grounds that it was good to have a renewal of Council members; Council members served for three years and were not permitted to serve again on the Council until one year had elapsed; the three-year term was fixed, but the non-renewal was not, so the Council was free to discuss this matter and make a proposal to the AGM. The Archdeacon had responded briefly to some other points raised by Gerd Gebhard. These matters would be discussed at a future meeting.

16. Discussion of charities to be supported in 2018 (in the presence of the Charities Committee representatives, Martin Curwen and Jacqui Spence)

Martin Curwen, the Charities Committee Convener, said it was useful to have a meeting with the Council once a year to report on what the Committee was doing and to get feedback from the Council. The Charities Committee's role was to give opinions and proposals to the Council as to the charities that the Church could support. A number of selection criteria were applied when selecting potential charities, including a focus on the environment and education, support for women and children, development aid rather than disaster relief, a link with members of the congregation, an emphasis on third-world charities, a geographical spread and a time-span of three to five years. The Committee met three or four times a year to review any requests and follow up on the charities the Church was supporting; it made its proposals to the Council by the end of the year and, once the Council had approved them, it informed the charities and the Treasurer paid the funds. The amounts for the 2017 charities had therefore been disbursed at the end of 2017. The Committee wondered whether to choose small or bigger charities and whether it should give advance warning to charities which we did not intend to support any more. Also, there was the question of which of the charities we supported should be mentioned in connection with the advertising for the Fun and Fundraising Committee's events. There was a need to improve communication with charities and with the congregation. Another concern was that the Committee's membership had declined from 6-7 members to about two, so recruiting new people onto the Committee was something that Martin Curwen wanted to talk to the Churchwardens about.

Jacqui Spence described the charities supported in 2017, saying that the Committee preferred not to support charities with large overheads. Since the Church Fair had stopped, the amount of money available to give to charity had fallen, from a record level of €14 000 in proceeds from the Fair down to last year's €11 200, which represented 10% of the money donated to the Church. Philippa Seymour said there were now a number of fundraising events spread out through the year and these had raised about half of the Fair's proceeds. Leaflets about the charities supported were available, these could perhaps be supplemented by giving presentations in church. Evelyn Sweerts pointed out that giving had also gone down (so the pot of money to give to charities was reduced) and so had the number of people attending services.

Jacqui Spence said it would be useful to have some idea, by the middle of the year, about how much money the Charities Committee would have to disburse. The Treasurer agreed that if the Committee contacted him in September/October, he would be able to provide an estimate of the amount available.

Evelyn Sweerts wondered whether the idea of effective altruism was being applied, i.e. where does x amount of money do most good, measured in life years. We needed to be clear about whether or not we wanted to take this idea on board. She would send Martin Curwen a link to the 'effective altruism' website which ranks charities.

Simon Norcross wondered whether consideration could be given to the Archdeaconry twinning project with a diocese in Uganda.

It was agreed to have another meeting with the Charities Committee in November 2018. Simon Norcross thanked Martin Curwen and Jacqui Spence for their presence and their work.

17. Dates of future Council meetings

- Monday 19 February 2018 at 7.30 pm, Centre Jean XXIII;
- Wednesday 21 March 2018;
- Wednesday 18 April 2018;
- **AGM** Wednesday 25 April 2018

18. Closing prayer

Simon Norcross closed the meeting at 10.20 pm, the Council joining together in saying the Grace.

Following the meeting the Churchwardens provided some refreshments to welcome the new Chaplain and his wife.