

All Saints, Hérault

The English Church at Saint Pargoire

Minutes of the Chaplaincy Council Meeting held by Zoom beginning at 10.06 am on Wednesday 19 May 2021

Present: Revd Roger Smith (Chairman), Patricia Bigot, Graham Gardner, John Gifford, Julie Johnson, Jim Mallett, Phyl Mallett, Jac Phillips, Sue Robinson, Delia Smith and Nigel Summersall.

Members present were marked on the sign-in sheet. The chairman opened the meeting with prayer and commented on and highlighted points from the recent diocesan document "A very brief guide to a well-run Chaplaincy Council". He welcomed Graham Gardner to his first meeting.

	Action
1 Apology for absence Andy Marshall	
2 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2021 were approved and signed by the chairman as a correct record.	
3 Matters arising	
3.1 3.1 Altar linen was still a work in progress.	Jac
3.2 3.5 Eucharistic Assistants Roger had sent the form to the Archdeacon and was awaiting a reply.	Roger
3.3 11.1.1 Lectionary The book had been bought; Patricia was using it.	
4 Elections/Appointments were duly proposed, seconded and agreed as follows:	
4.1 Lay Vice Chairman Nigel Summersall	
4.2 Secretary Nigel Summersall	
4.3 Joint Treasurers John Gifford and Nigel Summersall. This joint rôle would be reviewed when appropriate accounting software was found to enable John to assume sole responsibility.	
4.4 Two lay members of Standing Committee John Gifford and Delia Smith	
4.5 Electoral Roll Officer Patricia Bigot	
4.6 Safeguarding Officer & ID Checker Steven Hopkins	
A sum of money was allocated for Patricia to send flowers to Jenny Morgan on behalf of the council thanking her for the huge amount of work she had done as Safeguarding Officer since the start of the chaplaincy.	Patricia
4.7 Environment Link/Officer Post not filled	
4.8 Youth Officer Post not filled	
4.9 Sidespeople Trevor Jones, Steven Hopkins, Jim Mallett and Phyl Mallett	

Roger reported that Steven had started the safeguarding clearance process for Trevor.

4.10 **Minutes Secretary** Delia Smith

4.11 **Website and Publicity Manager** Andy Marshall (assuming his willingness to continue) helped by Delia Smith with Julie Johnson “keeping an eye”.

4.12 **Events Organiser** Jac Phillips

4.13 **Music Team** Alison Kane, Carol Gardner and Sue Robinson

5 **Finance**

5.1 **Income and Expenditure year to date** A statement had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Nigel pointed out that the charity contingency €500 had since been sent via the Barnabas Fund for their India Fund.

Delia questioned the diocesan common fund payment. Nigel confirmed that the 5% discount for prompt payment had not been taken. He would check if it was available as a rebate.

Nigel

5.2 **2021 Budget**

A revised budget had been circulated with the meeting papers. Nigel commented that fund raising was necessarily behind budget, both income and expenditure ahead. Little further expenditure was expected, except payments for use of the temple, so he recommended topping up the savings account. This was agreed.

Nigel

5.3 **Standing authority** for the treasurer(s) to make recurring payments such as temple rent, insurance, common fund, etc, was confirmed.

5.4 **Emergency Contingency Fund** It was agreed to top this back up to €500 but that the Standing Committee would consult all council members before responding to further world emergencies this year.

5.5 **Independent Examiner** No-one had been identified to take on this rôle, which could be fulfilled by anyone, chaplaincy member or not, who had the necessary competence and was not directly connected to the chaplaincy council. Nigel pointed out that there was no urgency as John Holmes had agreed to examine the 2021 accounts.

6 **Proposal for link with Toliara Diocese in Madagascar**

Roger reminded members of the connection established when the former Bishop of the Toliara Diocese preached at a Harvest Service. Julie said she would like to take further the information already collected and circulated to the council and to be the link person for a future partnership.

7 **Correspondence** None that wasn't the subject of an agenda item.

8 **Archdeaconry Synod Report** A comprehensive report had been written by Jim and is appended. He commented that, unlike some synods, it was not boring and

administration heavy. Highlights were the Diocesan Bishop and Archbishop of York's addresses and brief introductions to important key diocesan initiatives, including Living in Love and Faith.

9 **Safeguarding**

9.1 **Training**

Steven Hopkins had asked to be updated concerning training. Phyl would let him know via the new safeguarding email address that she has her C2 certificate. Patricia, Roger, Jim and Phyl have done C2, Delia C0 and C1, John C0. Other members had yet to do the training, including Nigel and Julie, who need C2 to continue to exercise their rôles.

At their previous meeting, the council had endorsed and minuted a request that the whole congregation do at least the C0 course. This request, with the necessary link, was on the front page of the chaplaincy website. Patricia would ask Steven to add his personal request via an email which she would send to everyone on the chaplaincy mailing list.

Nigel
Julie
Jac
Sue
Graham
Andy

Patricia

10 **Music Team Report**

Sue said not meeting in one another's houses made choosing music labour intensive, with many email exchanges. It brings insights and challenges but is rewarding. Roger said he thought the music for the previous Sunday was fabulous. It was generally agreed that service, including Julie's address, had been one of the best.

Julie proposed and all agreed a big thank you to the music team.

11 **Website** Delia tried to keep this up to date since Roger had made it easier to navigate.

There was a feeling that the website wasn't much used. Roger agreed to write an email for Patricia to distribute to the mailing list reminding them to check it for updates.

Roger
Patricia

12 **Roger's re-licensing** A resolution asking that the Bishop re-license Roger for a minimum of three more years would be formulated and brought to the next meeting.

Nigel
Julie
Jim

13 & 14 **Church and Diocesan Initiatives & Chaplaincy Development**

It was agreed to defer these items to a future meeting, when they could be given the time they deserved.

15 **Publishing names for prayer**

After discussion, a majority decision was taken to make no change to current practice.

16 **Recent Activities**

Podcasts Numbers listening were decreasing.

Lent Group Roger thought this had gone well. John commented that it was overall more difficult than face to face.

- 17 **Future Events**
- Monica Coulshaw had invited the chaplaincy to hold an **open air service in a part of their vineyard**. Roger would visit the proposed venue, with an eye to accessibility and shade, and report back. Roger
- The annual **open air ecumenical service and paella meal at Hameau de Besse** was planned for Sunday 20 June. Roger would circulate details. Roger
- Podcasts** Roger would be unable to do podcasts for the Prayer Group on 23 June and the first Sunday in July.
- 18 **Any Other Business** None.
- 19 **Next Meeting** Wednesday 2 June at 10.00 am by Zoom, concentrating on the items numbered 14, 15 and 18 on the current agenda and deferred.

The meeting closed at 11.45 am with members saying the Grace together.

Archdeaconry of France and Monaco

Annual Synod 15-17 April 2021

Report for the Chaplaincy of All Saints, Sainnt Pargoire, Hérault

The Synod is normally conducted over three full days. Last year it was cancelled because of the coronavirus and this year it was conducted by Zoom over two evenings and the following Saturday morning with a total time of about 9 hours, including 20 minutes of bible study before each session and a short time of worship at the end of each session.

The bible study each day (looking at the book of Ruth) was led by Peter Hooper, our new archdeacon.

Peter Hooper welcomed everyone to the Synod and introduced the theme of 'Looking Back and Looking Forward'.

Bishop Robert then gave the opening talk. He said the diocese had survived the last difficult year relatively unscathed for a number of reasons:-

Good cash receipts from the chaplaincies

Strong external support.

Good mutual care and fellowship

Agility, flexibility and perseverance of our clergy and lay leaders.

Bishop Robert listed a number of impacts of the pandemic on people – anxiety, loneliness and isolation, problematic grief, trauma and exhaustion.

There is of course, he said, hope in vaccines, but there may still be some restrictions in place in the longer term.

He saw the challenges ahead as:-

Rebuilding confidence

Stabilising budgets

Diversity and the 'Living in Love and Faith' initiative

Racial tensions

The Environmental Crisis

And for us in France, Brexit and the French Constitution and Law.

Bishop Robert pointed out that we have a new Archdeacon in Peter Hooper, a new Bishop's Chaplain, a strong Safeguarding Team and a full complement of archdeacons.

He said that the Diocese's bid for a quarter of a million pounds for digital provision was successful and that the Diocesan UK National Residency Support Team were up and running and very much welcomed and in demand.

Bishop Robert finished by suggesting three spiritual virtues to cultivate:-

Solitude -enabling us to make time for God

Simplicity -ensuring we control technology, not let it control us.

Sabbath -Let it be a day without screens!

He left us with the thought, that in this Easter Season, Jesus gives us Hope for the future.

The second part of the Thursday evening was a live Zoom keynote speech by the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell.

He introduced his talk by pointing out that in this Easter season, important things happen in the dark, as the Bible records. We have been and still are in a time of dark with the pandemic, but he suggested three good things that had emerged:-

We have 'rediscovered' pastoral care.

We have had a 'Digital Coming of Age', with 'new' people participating in on-line services etc.

Although this has been a year of 'Eucharistic Fast', if anything we have strengthened our faith by turning closer to Christ.

The Archbishop reiterated Bishop Robert's need for solitude, so that we may surely find Christ on the Cross.

He finished his address by reminding us that we are called to exercise a narrative of hope as followers of Christ.

Stephen Cottrell then answered a number of questions from chaplaincy members, fortified by a glass of gin and tonic handed to him by a hand on screen!

The evening finished with Compline.

On the second day, Peter Hooper again led the bible study.

There then followed a series of five short presentations on Key Diocesan Initiatives.

Zoe Webster spoke about the French Residency Support Group. The well qualified team is providing a valuable service to the many people who need help with their applications for French Residency. This diocesan support group is now linked with and supported by the UK National Support Programme which is funded by the UK government.

Jack McDonald is leading the Living in Love and Faith Initiative which is concerned with issues of gender and Identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. He summarised the potential for different levels of agreement or disagreement concerning the implementation of this initiative depending on whether one considers the Bible to be a totally Divine authority, a totally human authority or something in-between.

Smitha Prasad is heading the Breathing Life Initiative which is concerned with issues about the way the Church treats people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups (BAME). It will address issues such as:-

Is the Church institutionally racist?

Are behaviours in chaplaincies inclusive or racist?

What are the barriers for BAME people to participate in Chaplaincies?

David Coulston informed us about the Clergy Covenant/ Well-being Initiative. It is looking at how the Church (leaders and congregations) care for their clergy and how clergy care for themselves. He pointed to a book, 'Thrive', about how clergy can thrive and to a series of user guides (currently 5), which give clear guidance for congregations to address problems encountered by chaplains.

Christopher Walley is concerned with the Eco- Diocese Initiative. He said that there are key secular motives for environmental care, but bearing in mind the natural world is God's handiwork, the Church has a particular motivation and responsibility to play its part in ensuring that remedying damage to the environment is not left to future generations. The General Synod has set a target of net zero carbon footprint by 2030. He said that it is our Christian duty and witness to challenge fallacies such as - France is integrated, France is immortal, France is infinite!

We have to bear in mind that we cannot depend on the voluntary sector in France, to the same extent as in the UK where it is much stronger. He told us that a two year certificated course, 'Christian Rural and Environmental Studies', is available for those who want to be better informed and equipped.

The evening finished again with Compline.

Saturday morning started once more with (optional!) bible study. Peter Hooper gave us some interesting and insightful thoughts on the book of Ruth.

The morning was split into two sessions, the first of which was entitled, 'The Practicalities of Looking Forward'. Andrew Caspari, Chief Operating Officer and Diocesan Secretary, made salient points about a number of matters and Grace Fagan, Safeguarding Officer considered the important subject of safeguarding.

Questions were asked and answers given.

Andrew Caspari updated us about Chaplaincy Rules. He said that 2021 was a time to recover and move forward.. He stressed the importance of engaging lay training, improving the funding of curates, focusing on the provision of digital networks and training people to meet the challenges presented by social media.

Grace Fagan highlighted the importance of bringing together our faith and love of our community. She recommended that everyone should do the C0 safeguarding training course. Thankfully, the Church has embraced the Child Sexual Abuse report and not run from it. One of the most important conclusions from the report is the need to offer support to victims and survivors.

David Bean and Rosemary Ulyett, Archdeaconry Treasurer and Secretary respectively, gave updates concerning the accounts and administration and governance. Archdeaconry quotas for 2019, 2020 and 2021 were published and explained.

A conditional booking has been made for the 2022 Synod for May 2022.

For the second session we split into seven breakout discussion groups, chosen randomly.

We were asked to consider the following:-

Looking Back – What have we been missing and what have we been not missing in the life of our chaplaincies as a result of the covid pandemic?

Looking Forward - What are doing today that we want to keep?

Looking Forward – What do we want to do in the coming months and years?

A facilitator was appointed in each group who gave feedback to us all after we had reconvened.

The Synod finished with closing remarks by Bishop Robert and Archdeacon Peter, followed by closing worship.

Jim Mallett April 2021.