

Starbeck Methodist Church

Minutes of the Church Council Meeting held on Thursday 23rd February 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Rev. Alan Bolton (Chair), Chris Thomas, Anne Bolton (Secretary), Shirley Clark, Moira Smith, Edward Smith, Nancy McKendrick, Margaret Light, Doreen Thompson, Alan Johnson, Audrey Johnson, Ken Redshaw, Rev. Geoff Wilkinson, David Munroe, Rachel Denham, Margaret Gough, Pauline Mulholland, Malcolm Binks, Keith Nowell, Aline Nowell

Apologies: Julia Mosley, Shirley Clapham, Dorothy Sigsworth, Chris Lynch, Sue Lynch, Jon Lynch, Chris Binks, Rob Allen, Christine Robson, Martin Brassington, Tricia Brassington, Alison Wheatley

Minutes of previous meeting

These were accepted as a true record and signed by the minister.

Matters arising

Edward Smith has been accepted for Foundation Training, starting in September. He will be writing an article on this issue for The Link. The Council expressed its warm congratulations.

On 20th May there will be a circuit day on faith sharing, under the umbrella of 'Time to talk about God'; further details will be advertised soon.

The subject of The Link, and the amount charged for adverts, was raised, referring to the paper circulated with the agendas. The review group had agreed that the Link should carry on broadly in its current form, but there had been no conclusion on the amount charged for adverts. After some discussion, a motion was put that the cost of the adverts will be increased to £20 per annum, to be increased to £30 per annum after a further 2 years. There was a vote, with 16 in favour, 1 against, so the motion was carried.

Rev. Bolton reported that all adults working with children now have to have CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) clearance. Visiting leaders must always be accompanied by a cleared adult.

Circuit matters

David Munroe reported that Oatlands Methodist Church has decided to close. On a more positive note, a possible candidate, Christine Gillespie, has been found for Woodlands church. She will be visiting the circuit shortly.

In 2007 John Sadler will be retiring. The process of acquiring a new superintendent will start in March. Colin Emerson will not be seeking an invitation to extend his appointment in the Harrogate circuit after the coming year, so he too will be moving on in 2007.

There are ongoing discussions in the Bar/Grove Road area of the circuit, with a possibility of combining with the United Reform Church at Bilton.

Harlow Hill is currently hosting services for their local Anglican church.

It was agreed that the appointment of Rev. Colin Emerson to Starbeck for the forthcoming year will be announced to the Starbeck congregation.

The meeting approved Rev. Colin Emerson as the minister to carry out weddings at Starbeck Methodist Church from 1st August 2006.

Appointments from 1.5.06

Rev. Bolton circulated the list of appointments. He thanked Anne Bolton (standing down as Church Council Secretary) and Keith Nowell (standing down as Worship Meeting Convenor). Two vacancies were noted: Worship Meeting Convenor and Young Person on Council. The remaining names were all agreed, and appointed en bloc.

Reports and Recommendations

Resources Committee – Finance

Edward Smith reported that the audit has been completed and Schedule B remains unaltered since the last meeting. The Church Council approved Schedule B. Looking to the current year, Edward highlighted that the collections are down on last year, a cause for some concern, but to balance that out the fundraising is going well. It was noted that gas prices are about to increase significantly.

Edward then circulated the budget for 2006/07. He talked through the figures, bringing the Church Council's attention to the fundraising target of £7020, considerably higher than last year. It was agreed that this shortfall should be drawn to the attention of the congregation, in the hope that some may be able to increase their weekly giving. Edward will write some bullet points for The Link, highlighting the points of concern. There may be a need for a broader appeal to the congregation.

The budget was approved.

The meeting thanked Edward for his work as Treasurer.

Resources Committee – Property

Julia Mosley sent a written report. There is need for some more pointing work. The lunch club has provided a new boiler in the kitchen, and the church has purchased a similar one for the hall. Risk assessments have been carried out on the premises, with a view to producing a health and safety guide in the Autumn.

Malcolm Binks then talked about further property issues. The Resources Team has been concerned for some time about the wall at the front of the church, and is suggesting that the property is fenced at the front, at a cost of approx. £4,000. Church Council approved this proposal.

As part of the refurbishment project, the entire heating system will be replaced. Currently the system is not zoned; the new system will be. The specification for the porch extension has been agreed by the Resources Team, and plans were produced for general information. Work for the decorating schedule is underway but a volunteer is needed to co-ordinate ideas on colour schemes. A complete replacement for the whole sound and media system is incorporated in the project.

Submissions on the scheme have been made to Manchester. The funding is currently being considered. Approximately £60,000 is in place, and the sale of the Forest Lane property to the circuit should raise the remainder. The total cost of the scheme is estimated to be £183,000.

The Church Council formally approved the scheme as it stands.

Rev. Bolton reminded the Church Council about the history behind the Forest Lane property. The current agreement with the circuit expires in August. The Church Council agreed to extend this by a further 5 years if necessary.

A working party needs to be formed to consult on a colour scheme for the project. No volunteer was forthcoming to lead this working party, so there will be an appeal to the wider church.

Pastoral

Shirley Clark reported that there are now 19 pastoral visitors. Margaret Light, Joyce Routh and Hazel Saunders have recently joined the team. There are 148 members. Shirley Clark thanked all pastoral visitors for their work.

Worship

Rev. Bolton referred to the written report attached to the agenda. The proposals in the report were all accepted by the Church Council.

Church Groups

All groups were thanked for their written reports. At the moment they are displayed on the Church Council notice board; Anne Bolton agreed to put them on one of the boards in the hall for wider information before the next Parade Service. Later in the year the reports will be formally bound and dedicated at a service.

Charitable cause 2006/07

Three charities were considered. After some discussion, the majority of Church Council members voted to support the Schumen Methodist Church in Bulgaria. Some information on this cause will be published in the next copy of The Link.

Building on strength

Rev. Bolton introduced the topic, which Sue Lynch had raised initially, of church growth. Alan Johnson pointed out that 500-600 people per week come through the doors of the church, which is an opportunity for communicating the Christian message. It was agreed that it is not appropriate to evangelise aggressively, but more literature could be available. Once the building improvements have been completed, the worship area will be much more evident to all users of the building.

Discussion then turned to our confidence as a Christian community and the ability to publicise and talk about what goes on in the church to those who do not attend services. Rev. Bolton reminded the meeting about 'Time to talk of God', the initiative launched by the Methodist Church this year. All church members are part of the wider community and have many opportunities to enthuse about the life of the church.

A list of dates of church events was circulated.

Any Other Business

Chris Thomas reported to the church that the numbers staying for breakfast after an early communion service has dropped recently. Is this part of a wider issue of attendance at early communion? This will be discussed again.

Dates and times of next meeting

The following dates were confirmed: 25/4/06, annual church meeting. 12/10/06 Church Council. 22/2/07 Church Council.

Anne Bolton
24.2.06