

THE PARISH OF CENTRAL EXETER

Minutes for the Special Meeting of the Parochial Church Council on Wednesday 7th September 2022 at 2.30pm in St Petrock's church

Present: 21 members of the parish plus rector and archdeacon, Andrew Beane

Apologies: 3

1. **Welcome & Prayer:** Keith welcomed the archdeacon, Andrew Beane, and everyone to the meeting. Sheila read a prayer.

2. **Future of the parish: Archdeacon of Exeter, Andrew Beane, to share ideas/plans**

Andrew apologised for missing the meeting scheduled for Wednesday 27th July.

This afternoon he spoke about the complex picture in our Diocese and how some churches came to be a single church parish or a multi church parish such as Central Exeter.

Andrew suggested one way forward to achieve a sustainable community is to form a 'City Centre Urban Partnership'. In essence this would be a number of churches/parishes working together with different areas of responsibility. A partnership document would need to be signed by all churches concerned. A partnership would allow all existing church communities to keep their own identity but work together to flourish. In essence the partnership churches would share their talents and resources to enable worship/activities/events to happen across the city and live out the Diocesan vision to 'Pray – Grow – Serve with Joy'. He gave as examples St Stephen's being used as a toddler group base for St Matts or a resource to support the ministry for music. Another example could be Unlimited Church using St David's as an outreach for Exeter College.

Initially each parish would retain its own PCC but send delegates to a Joint Council as the Partnership works to become established and while the PCC's work in parallel before finally transferring responsibility to the Joint Council. The timescale for this happening is over the next few years.

Once Andrew had explained the vision of a City Centre Urban Partnership he took questions. He was keen to point out that closure of churches is not on the agenda but to find ways that they can be used more creatively as all our churches across the city offer something unique and special. It was noted that in other walks of life specialities/talents are shared such as in the education world.

Andrew also shared the view that vicars can't be all things to all people so that in a partnership the skills of individuals could be brought together to work in partnership for the good of God and the Gospel.

As people may favour one type of churchmanship over another people can be signposted to the one best suited to them within the partnership.

Sheila and Betsy both reiterated the main concern of the parish being that an Electoral Roll of 38 cannot do all the organisational activities a parish demands especially as many members are now older.

Andrew thought that employment of a business manager would help to run the churches and so allow the clergy and others to do their work. (We pointed out that Mary already fulfils that role very effectively)

The point was made that different groups eg ENC already use our parish churches so an informal partnership has begun.

It was agreed that effective and clear leadership will be key to making this work across Exeter.

Next steps:

- talk as a PCC
- Keith to draft a letter to St David's with a copy to the Archdeacon to sound out how we might begin conversations about the creation of a partnership
- Send letter to Andrew to say in principle we are....
- Sheila to contact St Matts re: using St Stephen's for a toddler group

Sheila thanked Andrew for coming and explaining a way forward for the future.

3. Date and Place of future meetings:

Wednesday 7th December; Wednesday 8th March 2023;
APCM Sunday 16th April 2023

This part of the meeting closed at 3.30pm.