

Minutes of the Waterside Benefice Extraordinary Joint PCC Meeting, held at
The Hub, Carnon Downs at 7pm on Tuesday 18th February 2025.

Present

Chair - Revd. Martyn Pinnock.

From St Piran's - Kay Lobb, Janet Thomas, David Simmons, Paul Stuart,
Patricia Wilcocks, Ann Rawlinson, Juliet Dundon, Linda Lloyd, Tony
Woodbridge, Lorraine Rogers, Tim Rogers. Apologies from Rosemary
Aitken and Heather McCombie.

From St Feock - Robert Talbot, Donna Bryant, Sue Jones, Martin Davey, Monica
Derrick.

From Devoran - Mandy Walker, Adrian Walker, Janet Boxall, Anne Ramsden,
Sarah Seddon, Alicia Skeplorn.

Welcome and Prayer

Revd Martyn welcomed everyone and said an opening prayer.

Introduction by Revd Martyn Pinnock

In the summer of 2024, the Bishop of St. Germans asked Martyn to speak with the church at Feock, and to guide them in their role within the Waterside Benefice. He found them content, as indeed were the other two churches.

With Revd. Karen Wilson gone, now was not the time to dwell on her ministry, but to move forward and appoint a new minister. He found that there was strength in each church and there could be strength in the Benefice together.

It was time to formulate a new mindset for the three churches to be alive in one Benefice, to attract a new priest. The overall objective in the coming months must be to agree and write down collective requirements for a new minister. Martyn encouraged everyone to be clear and detailed in specifying requirements in order to facilitate honest communication with potential applicants. He suggested that the benefice might be characterised as an "Established worshipping community" with each Church having its own, different, traditions.

Above all Martyn urged that the collective benefice congregation looked carefully at themselves prior to dealing with each other. Or, to quote the the Lord's Prayer;

"Forgive our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

Questions

People wanted to know why it had all gone wrong in the previous ministry. This generated a general discussion which aired some mutually agreed points. Martyn pointed out that certain material from the diocese could not be shared due to its confidential nature.

It was thought that perhaps pressure was made to become one Benefice with the same style of worship for everyone.

Many thought that the lack of accommodation within the parishes, which had been promised by the diocese, but never materialised, was a contributing factor.

There was general appreciation of the point that there had been a total lack of support and supervision for a new, and inexperienced priest.

Discussion

Moving on it was agreed that the next priest should

1. Be experienced.
2. Be fully briefed on the history of the whole Benefice.
3. Be overseen and supported by someone above them in the diocese.
4. Ideally have accommodation provided within the parishes.

A lot of the church work is done by volunteers, and this needs to be acknowledged by paid clergy. Younger volunteers are needed too. Change is often necessary but requires careful introduction and management – a skill in its own right.

Martyn noted that there were potential benefits for the Churches working together that have not hitherto been explored. Examples were joint insurance or energy supply to obtain potential discounts.

It was questioned as to whether a JCC was a legal requirement in a Benefice, perhaps meetings with the vicar and all Churchwardens would suffice. Perhaps joint PCC meetings like today twice a year could allow any problems to be aired openly and resolved, as well as sharing of new ideas.

Trish Wilcocks noted that some of the ways of working together that were envisaged by the three Churches prior to appointment of a Priest In Charge had not been followed through in practice.

Benefice Wide Meeting to be held on

Saturday 1st March

at The Hub,

starting at 11:00am

The format of this would be tables for six people to share ideas and write a covenant, covering these points.

1. What do we hold in common for worship?
2. Acknowledgment of the past, but it is gone.
3. Acknowledgment that each church is equal in the Benefice, declaring shared or unique goals.
4. Areas where we can help each other.
5. The fellowship of all believers.
6. Agreement of a common-sense approach to a United Benefice.

Lent Course

The joint Lent Course starts on Wednesday 12th March and runs for five weeks. It is using Hilary Brand's book 'Christ and the Chocolaterie'.

Martyn recommended watching the film 'Chocolat' before the course started, and Devoran were hoping to facilitate this by a showing of the film in early March, for those who couldn't watch it at home.

Books for the course were available to take home at the end of this meeting.

Closing Prayers

Martyn invited us to add our own prayers to opening prayer.

Meeting closed at 8:15pm.