

The Parochial (Parish) Church Council meets every two months, and below is a report on the most interesting bits from our recent meeting. If you have views on anything we discuss, or on what we should discuss, please speak to any of the PCC members. Anyone who is on the church electoral roll can stand for election to the PCC, which happens at the annual church meeting every April.

PCC Meeting 10th February 2011

Bible reading and prayer: Steve read 1 Tim 1:12-17 and prayed that we might have the same concern as Paul: that honour and glory might come to God.

Sunday Club & Creche: We have nearly 70 children, 20 in the creche, 20+ at Scramblers, 10 at Adventurers, 7-8 at Climbers and 16 at Explorers. We praise God for the number and quality of people involved. Work is starting on a syllabus from Scramblers up, that can be reused every 2-3 years, freeing up more time and energy for training leaders and building relationships. Holiday Club this year, 'Come Dine With Him', is coming up in April.

Front Extensions planning: we considered a proposal for the front extension. A major aim is to make the building welcoming from the street. Concerns were raised about the provision of space for Sunday Club (rooms are needed for extra creche space and an office area for Jon Tuckwell). With our current numbers we may need to consider other options for some of the children's groups. Church activities, including disabled access, will continue during building work.

Abbey Church building: This building needs work and is currently a drain on resources. Richard Newman is engaged in discussions with the Council and others about alternative use, but there are no specific proposals yet. We are grateful for a recent bequest, which more than covers the immediate emergency repair costs. We are praying that we will find a way forward.

Finance and budget: We are grateful for a steady rise in regular giving. The government Gift Aid rules may be about to change. The staffing budget (the major component of the church budget) for 2011-12 is likely to remain essentially unchanged from 2010-11; Jon Tuckwell will join the staff and is funded by the diocese.

Resolution regarding the Church of England legislation for women bishops: We feel it is courteous to make our view known to the Diocese, and important to support Steve and Chris as ordained ministers who could not in good conscience serve under a woman bishop. We are also aware of differing views within the church family. We passed a resolution calling for greater provision for those unable to accept the ministry of women bishops, desiring that 'all faithful Anglicans remain and thrive together in the Church of England'. Please do ask any of the PCC members about our discussion on the theology and practice of men and women's roles in the church.

Anna Bickerstaffe