

The Archdeacons Visit.

Minutes of Extra Council Meeting held at The Vicarage on 4th March 2017

The meeting opened at 1.35pm after a very good buffet lunch where we all had time to meet Meurig, the Archdeacon.

1. He opened with a prayer and urged us to get the paper work for the Vacancy to Catherine Jackson as soon as it is ready.
2. We then went through the Church Profile, which had been produced by Maggie Kent and Keith Fowler, and the Archdeacon answered our question and also put forward his observations on the wording of the document.
3. Suzanne and Keith will meet to sort out the Budget plan.
4. Maggie asked about Entry requirements and the Archdeacon said we would have to get them from the UK Embassy in Paris. It was possible that there could be applications from the world over. Ideally we are looking for a UK based priest but we can't actually ask for that. With that in mind we would have to look at the repatriation, in case of illness etc. Also the removal cost could be expensive.
5. The Archdeacon thought the profile was a fair reflection of where we are now. There should be photos of people/congregation/events and not just buildings. The position of the places of worship and the distances to cover, with a map, would be valuable. We need to explain the location of congregations and mention the Deux Sevres being important, we are not just the Vendée. He asked what the approx. milage/kilometrage would be. Doug said that Brian, when he was priest in charge, covered 20000Km.
6. He recommended the word Worshipers rather than members. Open worship was also important, he had come from a Baptist background and appreciated that our congregations were also very varied. A brief explanation about the various groups who are in our area, such as Faites le Plan, Filling Station and Rendez-vous was given. Doug explained the difference between Association **Culturel** and Association **Cultuelle**. We must try to keep everyone happy!
7. We should aim at good music, Polly pointed out that the services were varied due to the different hymn books we used and the need for more musicians. Jo liked the fact that they could read the scriptures from their own Bibles, making it more personal.
8. Meurig was pleased with the ecumenical work being carried out.
9. John asked if we had freedom with the choice of readings and music, did the Diocese have a view on our policy or did we have to follow the C of E pattern? At the present time this is the task of the Ministry Team and The Archdeacon said this, with consultation, with all concerned, including the musician, should carry on. It is however the priest who has the final say.

10. Safeguarding is very important and we should all try and complete the level 1, on-line instruction, and if appropriate we should try to attend the level 2 training day when they arise. Though as Meurig said we need more training days and more trainers.
11. The questions on the Person Spec would be the ones used during the interview, so are very important. One or two changes to be made, Ministry Team, change of wording, Pastoral importance, working knowledge of French essential. We would be expecting 2 days a week with 3 Sunday mornings a month. Flexibility was important, thinking about the Pastoral care and should there be a funeral. Funerals are arranged much more quickly in France than UK.
12. We voted for Option B, and agreed that the post is open to men and women.
13. We are looking for someone to Preach and Teach. We have produced a 3 year profile and would be looking for a 3 year contract, or more if available. Richard asked the Archdeacon how long he would be with us? Unless the Bishop required him elsewhere he would be with us for 5 years.
14. Explanation of Key Contacts. There are 2 Church Wardens and 3 assistants. There is the Council and there is John, our Reader, who we share with the Chaplaincy of Poitu-Charentes.
15. The question was asked. How long did the A-D think we would have to wait before we could expect interviews and decisions? The Archdeacon asked if the Profile could be with him by the end of the month and if so we could be looking at our new Priest by Advent. We hope and Pray this is so, but thank Hazel and Martin for their help in the meantime.
16. Maggie and Keith will do their best.
17. The meeting closed with a "Well Done" from the Archdeacon at 3.15pm.