

MINUTES OF ST MARY'S ARDLEIGH PCC MEETING on  
Thursday 7 September 2023 at 7.30 pm held at Highfield,  
Fox Street, Ardleigh CO7 7PN

1. Prayer

The Revd Phillip Young opened the meeting in prayer. Start time recorded as 19:40.

2. In attendance:

Martin West (Chair) (MW), Rosemary Kleingeld (RK), Richard Culley (RC),  
Christina Volkmann (CV), the Revd Phillip Young (PY).

Invited: Caroline Allen (CA), Susan Carne (SC).

3. Apologies for absence – None

4. Conflict of interest – none declared.

5. Minutes of previous meeting 6 July 2023 were approved & signed by the  
Chair.

6. Matters arising: None

7. SAFEGUARDING: CA reminded us that the purpose of the Safeguarding poster is to alert people that we are safeguarding in and around St Mary's including our congregation and all who join in church activities. The Diocese has supplied their poster but we can of course supplement with one of our own. CA has redrafted the safeguarding policy to be expressed clearly and simply and of course it references the policy of the diocese. The policy is to be updated annually in September. CA has prepared a Who's who/ in Ardleigh in order to keep track of individual progress in DBS checking and whether individuals are registered in the update checking service. CA feels she should be training someone else to be able to take over from her. She pointed out that compliance is a culture thing for churches as we all need to be aware and alert and it is of course vital as we grow our outreach so that we can offer a safe place to people who we don't know. Dedham and Ardleigh each need a parish SO despite being one benefice. CA is arranging drop-in training events every two months. She will email two documents for circulation which are to be saved in Dropbox.

8. ARDLEIGH SCHOOL

MW read out part of the end of year newsletter circulated to parents, also the letter to parents sent by the interim executive board chair. She thanked the PCC for support for the school in its application to join Canonium Learning Trust (CLT) as an academy. The application will be sent on 12 September to the Diocesan Board of Education. We noted that Amanda Watts is still involved with the school but no longer as a PCC member therefore we need a separate channel of communication between school and CC and this can involve SC and CA to report back to us on a regular basis.

9. BAPTISM POLICY FOR BENEFICE

PY presented for discussion his paper on infant baptism policy in the benefice of Dedham and Ardleigh (see below). Essentially this is for a service of baptism in Ardleigh church within the worshipping life of our community so that we are then able to encourage parents to stay with us, joining with their children in our activities such as Little Steps, and worshipping with

our congregation in café church, Morning Prayer or other family worship. The PCC noted and approved the policy.

10. FINANCE. MW presented the latest update to Parish share showing our contribution at end July to be 58.4% (£5838) of target for the year. Regarding Q2 church accounts supplied by Sara M, we agreed that £2487 paid for maintenance from the general fund should be reassigned to Fabric Fund as this included work on mortuary etc and the fabric fund is larger which may be against us when applying for building grants. In October we should approve draft quarterly figures for accounts.

11. RESOURCING MINISTRY:

- a. Reach Out update. Café church: SC now has a core group of helpers. All outreach is assigned in accounts as Heritage café but includes book sales and table sales so SC will talk to Sara Marshall about correcting allocation codes
- b. LITTLE STEPS: We have had report for September from CA which was presented for discussion. Attendance still encouraging with one mother on the planning team. There's a positive response for café church too (including for Harvest café church) and CA plans to make contact with the school, the preschool and the Health visitor team.
- c. SERVICES. MW brought the music list for September services which is prepared by Antony Watson. We confirmed that there are no hymns played at Café church at present, although SC pointed out there is a keyboard available now.

*For Autumn services we plan as follows*

1 October 8.00 HC followed by Harvest café church. SC will invite school and families to join in for a breakfast

7 October 9.30 Morning Prayer

15 October 9.30 HC

22 October Ayre family service of baptism

29 October 9.30 Joint benefice HC

5 November 8.00 HC followed 9.30 by Café church. At Dedham 3.30pm service for loved ones

12 November 10.30 Outdoor Remembrance taken by Richard Hopkins. RK and SC organizing.

19 November 9.30 HC

26 November Morning prayer 9.30

3 December 8.00 HC and 9.30 café church. No bellringers service (this was a one-off held last year to support Essex change ringers)

10 December 9.30 Morning prayer

17 December 4pm Carol service (there is also one at Dedham)

20 December (Wed) Christingle and Little Steps Christmas party

24 December midnight mass at Dedham

25 December 8.00 HC

- d. ARDLEIGH CELL GROUP: Started 12 September
- e. Junior church council (Benefice)– this is a vision that has yet to be actioned.
- f. DEANERY SYNOD: CV reported that there has been no recent meeting.
- g. FABRIC: MW, SC and CA are meeting the PC on 12 September to discuss churchyard tree work. Apart from quotes awaited for tower and roof repairs we need to replace the broken lid for vault in the churchyard.

- h. BELLS: Between meetings the PCC agreed to cover maintenance costs at £15,000 of which £5000 will be taken from the balance of current bell fund. We are currently raising funds from activities like our recent book sale. David Culham has now advised we need to reorder access to the ringing chamber as current ladder entry is too steep and also improve ventilation. MW will discuss with Bakers of Danbury or Keystone.
- i. Friends – SC plans an AGM in October to follow after the service.
- j. Hourly charges for use of church. Waiting news on energy costs.
- k. PEOPLE/ROTAS/CLEANING: RK will send out the Christmas rota for locking up early.
- l. No current H and S reports. We have acquired an improved access ramp for step to the Lady Chapel – can be used in main body of church too.
- m. POLICIES: RK is maintaining these. To discuss at next meeting.

12. Correspondence: None

13. AOB: We approved CCLI church copyright and music reproduction license fees due.

MW reported that the licensing service for John Saxon, our second Parishes' missionary, will take place at Tending church at 7.30 pm on 10 October. We are asked to bring glutenfree refreshment plates. We noted that 3 PCC members plus SC would like to attend and MW will notify archdeacon that 4 are going from here.

14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 30 November at Highfield at 7.30

15. We closed in prayer at 21.30

### **Discussion paper – Infant baptism policy for the benefice of Dedham & Ardleigh**

Author: Revd. Phillip Young

Wednesday, 6 September 2023

- Enquiries for Holy Baptism and/or Thanksgiving for infants that are received in the office should clarify first the residence of the enquiring family and, if one of the parishes of the Harwich Rural Mission, details can be gathered and shared with one of the ministers in the parish, who will find a time to meet with the couple (where possible) in their own home
  - In exceptional circumstances (e. g. ill health of the baby), one of the Rural Missioners should be contacted by the office directly to handle the enquiry separately to the process outlined here
- In that first meeting, the minister would introduce themselves, share the *First Steps* video produced by CPAS (copy [here](#))
- They should then refer to [the Baptism liturgy in Common Worship](#) to illustrate at least the following:
  - The Decisions required to be made by parents and godparents
    - Explaining that this is a 'big ask' in our society today, where many of our close friends may not identify as Christians and/or be comfortable to make such declarations

- The language of welcome used by a congregation to the child: “We welcome you into the fellowship of faith; we are children of the same heavenly Father; we welcome you.”
  - This provides the context for the minister to explain that **the baptism (or Thanksgiving) most naturally takes place in the context of a normal service of public worship with the local congregation is present**
- Then the minister will cover some of the considerations of:
  - Godparents – must be *at least baptised* (ideally confirmed) **and** a minimum of one of each sex (ideally two of the sex of the child, one of the opposite sex), [according to Canon Law](#) (B23, ss. 1, 4)
    - If potential Godparents would find The Decisions difficult to affirm themselves (for the reasons highlighted above), they can be included in the service as Guide Parents (and will receive a card reflecting this, similar to Godparents themselves)
  - Preparation – Parents must (and Godparents can) attend a 3-week online course [Hope Explored](#), covering how the Christian faith can provide hope, peace and purpose, to equip them with some basic building blocks for raising their children in the Christian faith
  - Commitment – Parents must attend at least once a month a public service of worship (ideally a family friendly service, where they exist) ideally for six months (or for a minimum of three)
    - This enables the congregation to get to know them and, hopefully, for the families themselves to explore what raising a child in the fellowship of their local parish church might look like
- All these factors must be taken into consideration before a date can be considered (although a rough guide can be provided that factors in these considerations)
- The alternative service of [Thanksgiving](#) should also be shown, especially how it enables parents to give thanks for the gift of the child, asking for help to raise him/her and, importantly, **not** asking those who might be Godparents in a baptism to affirm things they may not currently believe
- The minister might like to conclude with a scripture (e. g. Proverbs 22:4 or Ephesians 6:4) and a brief prayer for the parents and their child(ren)
- When the minister follows up by e-mail in the following days, they can summarise the main ways forward, e. g.
  - If Holy Baptism, then need to consider Godparents, preparation and commitment and the goodwill of their local minister (if they do not reside in the parish where baptism is sought, see [Canon B22.5](#)), or
    - Also, if this step is to be explored the minister should enquire as to the parent’s marital status. If they are not married, the minister should explain that that would be incompatible with The Decisions they make and should invite them to consider entering in to Holy Matrimony (which should be done ideally before, but can be done alongside this enquiry).
  - If Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child, simply finding the next Sunday morning service where it can be done, confirming it with the minister taking that service and the family themselves (and mentioning that, if they would like to, they can keep baptism in mind at some point in the next year or so)
  - The minister should encourage the family to come to a service soon and specifically mention family-friendly services/ministries in the parish of enquiry, e. g.
    - For Ardeleigh: Little Steps, Café Church and All Together services,
    - For Dedham: Junior Church and Rise ‘n Shine

- A form (available from the office) should then be sent to the family once the next steps have been identified (this can be requested by copying [stmaryda@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryda@gmail.com) in to the e-mail correspondence)