



## HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

### **COUNCIL REPORT – May 2024 to July 2024**

Council met twice during this period in May and June. There is traditionally no Council meeting in July. May was the first meeting of your new Church Council as elected at the AGM in April. We welcomed three new members of Council, all serving for the first time, Armored Duncan, Khosi Khumalo and Mark Faber. They replaced Aidan Liddle, Gill Howie and Clare Amos who had reached the end of their terms. Aidan and his family are moving back to the United Kingdom and will be much missed. Gill had served two three year terms and we thank her for her dedicated service to Council. Clare was elected as one of our Archdeaconry representatives and so will continue to sit on Council.

#### **Deep Dive into our 2024 Priorities - Building Congregational Capacity**

In line with our Vision & Strategy three-year plan, Council had agreed four priorities to work on in 2024. Each of these priorities will be the focus of a dedicated Council meeting. At the May meeting Council considered how we can build our congregational capacity. Council had an in depth discussion on how to develop vocational discernment, foster stewardship and encourage participation in the life of the church. This is about each of us recognizing our gifts and talents and using them to enrich the ministry of our church. Many of you will recognize this theme from Canon Daphne's sermons linking Christ's teaching and message to how we develop our Christian life and action here and now. Mary Talbot drew Council's attention to a tool developed by the Diocese of Oxford, available at the following link: [Personal Discipleship Plan - Diocese of Oxford](#) It provides a diagnostic tool which can be used to help assess your talents and discern to what God might be calling you. Council had a rich discussion which we trust will help us to work towards a culture of welcome, listening and caring for one another in which each of us plays our part in the life of our Church.

#### **New Sound System**

As you may remember from previous reports, Council has been working on improving the sound system in church. We have been working with Lemansio, the sound architects recommended by our architects, Brodbeck Roulet. At the May meeting, Mary was able to bring forward the proposal from Lemansio based on their assessment of our current system. There are three principal reasons to consider a new system. Firstly, as a result of the renovation the acoustics in the church have changed, making the transmission of sound uneven, particularly in the nave. Secondly, the wireless frequency that we are using for our microphones is no longer permitted and thirdly, parts of our current system are now obsolete and we would not be able to procure spare parts if we needed them. The proposal has been divided into two parts. The first and major part replaces the control system, amplifiers and speakers in the nave. Two of the existing microphones will be replaced, one with a headset microphone, as well as the lectern microphone. The total cost of this first part is CHF 30'000. We are most fortunate that an anonymous donor has offered to fund 50% of these costs. The other 50% will be funded from our Development fund. On this basis Council approved the proposal. A second phase which would have replaced the microphones in the chancel and provided more microphones, including a second headset was not considered affordable at present. A member of Council subsequently came forward and offered to pay for a second headset. We are hoping that Lemansio will install the new system in September.

## **The Role of Churchwardens**

All good things, sadly, come to an end and after 6 years as one of our Churchwardens, Mary Talbot will be stepping down at the next AGM. As we start the process of identifying candidates to replace her, this seemed a good time to work on clearer definitions on the responsibilities and opportunities for delegation of this central role in our church life. Mary shared her thoughts and experiences on her work as our Churchwarden at our June meeting. The specific responsibilities of Churchwardens in the Diocese in Europe are outlined in a document entitled "Called to be a Churchwarden in the Diocese in Europe" written by Clare Amos and available on the Diocesan website. Below is a quote from Clare's document:

"The role of a Churchwarden is extremely varied but generally involves management, maintenance and mission. The Churchwarden's tasks involve leadership, labour and love."

Mary referred to Clare's piece, pointing out that the boundaries of the role are extremely broad, although the specific responsibilities are relatively narrow. The Churchwardens are the officers of the Bishop in the Chaplaincy. They represent the laity and promote the unity and peace of the chaplaincy, in co-operation with the Chaplain. They are also charged with maintaining order and decency in the church, especially during services. Mary stressed that there is considerable latitude in how these responsibilities are carried out and what is delegated to others. She presented to Council some priority areas she will work on prior to handing over to her successor.

- An emergency evacuation procedure with the appointment and training of fire marshals.
- Completing the handover for care and maintenance for the fabric of the church from the Building Tomorrow committee back to the Churchwardens
- Establishing the maintenance contracts for the electronic and digital systems in the church
- Clarifying the overlaps with the Verger, Christine Damary.

If you are interested in knowing more about being a churchwarden, I highly recommend reading Clare's explanations which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.europe.anglican.org/being-churchwarden>

Clare gives some fascinating background on the historical role of churchwardens in the Church of England. If you want to know what a churchwarden can do with their "wand" this is the reading for you.

## **Finances**

The half year accounts for end June were most encouraging. We are showing a small surplus of around CHF 900. In past years we have tended to show significant deficits at this stage of the year. Our income was boosted by a very successful summer fair. Our thanks go to Anna-Victoria who successfully managed this event and whose sunny smile contributed to the joyous atmosphere of the occasion. We have also received some very generous donations for which we are most grateful. Expenses are under budget, though we continue to closely monitor our utility expenses. We can now read the electricity meter which will allow us to better anticipate our bills.

## **Safeguarding**

At our June meeting, Carol Brown presented and Council adopted a Chaplaincy Domestic Abuse statement. We all share the responsibility of being aware of the misery caused by domestic abuse and being sensitive to any indication that it may be occurring. If in any doubt, contact Carol, our safeguarding officer.

Carol has been making heroic efforts to ensure that all of us who have roles and responsibilities in our church complete the necessary safeguarding training. She ran a session in May in the church hall at which 14 people completed their basic awareness course. This is the level needed for sidespeople, welcomers, servers and technical teams. Cake was provided as an incentive, the stick part of the equation was that anyone who had not completed this basic awareness course by 30<sup>th</sup> June would be taken off the rotas. We have to be absolutely compliant on this point. If you still have not completed

your basic awareness course for any reason, please contact Carol, myself or a churchwarden and we would be happy to help you in any way we can.

### **Building Tomorrow**

The first phase of our renovation project is winding to a close. The church has been assessed for any safety concerns and is expected to receive full fire certification next month. The vestry cupboards now have handles, an advantage to which I can attest, as a sidesperson. In autumn Council will turn its attention to planning for the second phase which as originally conceived included renovating and upgrading the current hall and creating a second basement level. Council will have a special meeting on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October. There have been many new faces on Council since we first planned our project so we will review in depth the structure and planning of the second phase. We will also do a full financial review of the actual costs of phase one and the revised costings for phase two. We will consider the current funding in hand and the shortfall needed to finance phase two. Council should then be in a position to make decisions and communicate with the congregation on how to proceed. Our current council remains aware of the commitment given by previous Councils to the congregation that we would not proceed with phase two until we are sure of sufficient funding. These are weighty decisions which will impact the generations to come and so we need to give time, careful reflection and prayer to move forward as a community.

Your Council will reconvene on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August, refreshed and ready for a busy autumn programme. Please contact me, or any other member of Council, to ask questions or comment on the issues we are working on. We are your elected representatives to work with our Chaplain, Daphne, to develop and grow our life in Christ in our church community.

Ursula McGregor

6<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Secretary to the Council