THE UNITED BENEFICE OF
HENLEY-ON-THAMES WITH REMENHAM

PARISH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, HENLEY-ON-THAMES
www.stmaryshenley.org.uk

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
held on
Tuesday 11th November 2008
at 8.00 pm
in the Chantry House

PRESENT

The Rector, Brian Brent, Carol Brook-Partridge (Churchwarden), Ceridwen Cranford, Stuart Crippen (Treasurer), Anne Forrest, Stephen Nichols (Secretary), Martin Whittaker and Mary Wood.

The meeting began with prayers.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Andy Butler, Peter Hopkins, Liz Preston and Geoffrey Taylor.

2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the last PCC meeting on the 16th of September were approved, with one amendment. Martin Whittaker proposed that a sentence be added to the second item of Any Other Business: "This had last been discussed at the March 2008 PCC meeting where there had been unanimous agreement to assess the feasibility of this proposed building alteration". The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

3 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4 MATTERS FOR DECISION AND REPORT

a) The Quinquennial inspection was begun on 4th November. The architect was unable to complete inspection of the roof while the mobile phone masts in the Tower were switched on. He will arrange to complete the inspection in due course, on a date when the masts can be switched off. The PCC will receive a report on the inspection after this.
b) We have not yet heard any more news from the Diocesan Advisory Committee on the sale of the Petrus van Schendel painting.
c) The PCC discussed how its charitable donations for the year, the Parish Tithe, should be allocated. The churchwardens produced a leaflet for the congregation showing which organisations had received donations in the past, and asking for further suggestions. No other organisations were suggested. After briefly discussing

each item in turn, the PCC agreed to donate much the same this year as last year. No donation will be made to the Anglican Church in Jerusalem, as the charity appears no longer to be running, and other charities will receive an increased donation, or a donation for the first time. The following donations will be made:

St Francis Mission, Zimbabwe	£500
United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel	£500
Society of St John the Divine, South Africa	£300
The Bible Society	£500
Christian International Peace Service (ChIPS)	£500
St Luke's Hospital for the Clergy, London	£500
The Samaritans	£500
Trinity Hospice, Clapham	£500
Badgemore Primary School	£250
Badgemore Primary School Playgroup	£250
Yeldhall Manor, Wargrave	£500
Parents and Children Together (PACT)	£250
Chiltern Centre for Disabled Children	£500
Henley Lions Club – Christmas parcels for the elderly	£100
Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust	£100
Historic Churches Preservation Trust	£100
Reading Jubilee Debt campaign	£20
Christian Aid Congo appeal	£500
Henley YMCA	£250
Additional Curates Society	£250
Sue Ryder Care Nettlebed Hospice	£250

The PCC has already donated this year £500 to each of the Burma Cyclone appeal, the China Earthquake appeal, and "Send a Cow, Africa" (together with St Nicholas' Remenham).

About £1500 is waiting to be sent to the Diocese of Lima, after previous pieces of fundraising. This will be sent to Lima shortly.

5 TREASURER'S BUSINESS

Stuart Crippen reported that our assets, excluding the COIF shares, are showing a small increase for the year to date. This indicates that we are likely to break even at the end of the year. This healthy position is due to two legacies recently received – one more legacy is due shortly. As previously mentioned, planned giving is showing a small decrease compared to last year.

Stuart will make the donations agreed and listed above as the Parish Tithe before the end of the year.

We have received donations of £53,303 to the organ fund, which has paid £50,733, leaving a balance of £2570. The organ restoration is almost complete, although there are a few minor adjustments still required. The final bill of £6,750 including VAT will be paid when Philip Aspden, the organist, agrees that these have been completed. After this, we can reclaim VAT on some of the work. Further fundraising is planned

for 2009, including a concert in March, and we might receive further funds from Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust.

The Son et Lumière, on the weekend of 15th November, is being underwritten by the Friends of St Mary's, so will not incur costs for the PCC.

PCC Unrestricted funds stand at £77,461 and Restricted funds at £91,526, excluding COIF shares.

6 HEALTH AND SAFETY

There were no health and safety matters to be discussed.

7 AOB

a) Martin Whitaker reported that the Chantry House Management Committee had met since our last meeting, and discussed the proposal for installation of a lift in the Chantry House. At the September PCC meeting, concerns had been raised about the proposal for a vertical lift. The Chantry House Management Committee has decided to update the feasibility plan for installation of an Incline Platform lift, an alternative to the vertical lift.

b) A donation has been offered for the purchase of a parish flag. This would be flown from the tower, instead of the cross of St George, at certain festivals. The design would be based on the cross of St George, with the addition of a blue crown over the letter "M". The PCC agreed to this.

c) Planning for a stewardship campaign will take place during Advent. Carol Brook-Partridge asked for volunteers to help with the organisation of this.

d) At the September PCC meeting, the PCC agreed to form action groups to look into various areas of church life. Carol Brook-Partridge reported membership of these groups as follows:

Events and Communication	Mary Wood, Anne Forrest, Ceridwen Cranford, Stephen Nichols
Finance and Buildings	Stuart Crippen, Geoffrey Taylor, Brian Brent, Martin Whitaker
Discipleship and Mission	Liz Preston, Andy Butler, Peter Hopkins, Carol Brook-Partridge
Liturgy and Music	David Dew, Fr Martyn Griffiths, Philip Aspden

e) Roger Cole, from the d:two Henley Baptist Church, requested a donation of £100 for a production by the Spring Dance Company, to be performed in Christchurch URC during Advent. The PCC agreed.

f) The church owns a red Altar Frontal which used to be used on the nave altar. After many years of use it is in a bad condition and a replacement was bought a few years ago. Mary Wood has taken the old frontal, and its accompanying superfrontal, to the Royal School of Needlework, to ask if it could be repaired, and she reported on their findings. They were very pleased to see the frontal, and suggested it dates from the late nineteenth century. They would be happy to restore it, and suggested

two possible ways to do this. The first, less expensive, option is to restore the main frontal and superfrontal, and join them together. The second option is to restore the main frontal, replace the velvet of the superfrontal, present the original embroidery onto the new velvet, and join the frontal and superfrontal together. RSN estimated around £3000-£3500 for the first option, or around £6500-£7000 for the second option.

The PCC was keen that this ancient part of the fabric and heritage of the church be restored, although new funds will need to be raised to pay for it. Several members of the PCC asked for more information on the restoration work, such as how long the restored frontal could be expected to last, whether any other organisation was capable of doing the restoration, and whether it was possible to do the less expensive restoration now, and then restore the superfrontal later. Mary said that it would be unwise to do the work in two parts, as this would involve undoing and then redoing work during the second part of the restoration. She and Fr Martyn said that such delicate work required the expertise of RSN, and the PCC agreed.

Mary agreed to ask RSN the further questions raised. The PCC agreed to the more expensive restoration, to be paid for by separate fund-raising, and as long as Mary and Fr Martyn were happy with the answers to our further questions.

8 PASTORAL MATTERS

There were no pastoral matters to be discussed.

9 DATES OF PCC MEETINGS FOR 2009

The PCC agreed dates of meetings for 2009 as follows:

Standing Committee	***PCC***	***APCM***
6 January 2009	20 January 2009	
17 March 2009	31 March 2009	26 April 2009 after Evensong
26 May 2009	9 June 2009	
1 September 2009	15 September 2009	
27 October 2009	10 November 2009	

The meeting closed with prayer at about 9.30pm.

Signed by the Chairman ……

Dated ……