

## **committee**

*Vicar* - a slightly old and kindly gentleman. Always sees the best in others. Tends to get a little distracted, sometimes in his own language.

*Francesca Fenton* – Young eager enthusiastic, perhaps a little idealistic at times.

*James Jarman* – Grumpy teenager, constantly playing with mobile phone and ipod.

*Miss Gertrude* - a very elderly lady. She is a lovely lady but has dementia at times and can make some zany comments.

*Mr. Smith* - The church organist. A very quiet and inadequate man, very shy. He has a wife, but no-one has ever seen her. He sits in the room, swaying lightly, making infrequent giggling noises.

## **The Sketch**

**Vicar** - Welcome to the first meeting of our all age empowering, leadership management oversight collective forum meeting committee of St Cuthbert's in the valley on the hill. This week, as our pianist, Mrs. Miggins is unable to be with us as she is away on a 'using mandarin oranges and assorted varieties of fruit in worship' course, we shall forego the usual necessities of our previous committee gatherings and prerequisites of a song before we resume the commencement of the beginning of the meeting. I hope that's clear? Can I say it's lovely to welcome the lovely Francesca and young jimmy to our meeting, we do hope you feel able to 'big up' the voice of the children on the street, er wicked.

**James** – The name's James.

**Vicar** – oh yes sorry jimmy, my how you've shot up, and what a *sick* epod you have there.

**James** – It's an ipod

**Vicar** – I POD Hmm. Yes.. Now, we shall proceed forthwith to the first point on the church meeting agenda. This involves the need for a new door usher, following the tragic death of Mr. Peacock, who was taken from us in a tragic accident after he was stuck in one of the church organ pipes whilst tragically attempting to clean it and peering into it to find a missing bristle from his organ cleaning brush. A great loss. And the organ still won't play properly, will it Mr. Smith?

**Mr. Smith** - (giggles). No Vicar.

**James** - (under her breath) His loss our gain.

**Vicar** - No indeed. Something else we must address. But back to the usher role. I'm wondering if we have any volunteers for this valuable and essential role.

**Miss Gertrude** - Vicar, if I may, I'd like to volunteer for the position.

**Vicar** - Miss Gertrude, that truly is a magnanimous and most splendid gesture. However, I feel it would be best if you stayed in the kitchen making the teas and serving the cakes after the service where you do such a sterling job.

**Miss Gertrude** - Certainly Vicar.

**Vicar** - Now, do we have any other volunteers for this essential task? We need someone who will pat the heads of small children and thrust church literature into the hands of unsuspecting visitors, especially the leaflet entitled, 'Give to the church or forever be damned into eternal hell.'

**Fran** - Vicar I would like to volunteer for the task. I'd be happy to welcome new folks into the church, as they come I could get them to sign my stop the traffic petition, send a postcard to the Japanese prime minister to protest about whaling and anyone who's driven could do my quick carbon footprint questionnaire, it only takes 20 minutes. I've already got some clip boards and a book of stamps.

**Vicar** - Er, is there no-one else?

(Silence, people cowering as Miss Fenton stares them out)

**Vicar** - (hesitantly) Er, bless you my dear. I will make sure you have.. Oh dear.. Moving on, we have the essential role of maintenance of the church flowers..

**James** - Mobile goes off, James ignores it engrossed in his ipod, after a while the Vicar pokes him with his pen.

**Vicar** - Thank you, er, Jimmy. The wonders of modern technology. That reminds me I must talk with Mr. Anderson about getting our inter-page on the world wide net perhaps you could send him an i-mail hey Jimmy.

**Miss Fenton** – That sounds great Vicar, I'd be happy to look into a website for the church as part of my A2 IT Project, we could have links to our favoured organizations, Greenpeace, Plane stupid, 'Esso kill polar bears.org' and 'Tescum every little hurts the indigenous farmers of central Africa.com'.

**Vicar** - Yes, now back to the role of flower arranging. After my training in this as one of my core subjects at Bible College, I've carried this role for some time. However, I could be spending my time in more valuable ways on Sundays, such as replacing my vicar's hat which has grown a bit old and frayed. It wouldn't be a problem but Mrs. Vicar's sewing machine has packed up. A terrible thing really. She was sewing up my vicar's collar when a small surge in the electricity grid caused the machine to pack up. Gave Mrs. Vicar a frightful shock. We've been buying hair gel for a week now just to try and push her electrically charged hair back down. Every time she combs her hair she jumps like a kangaroo. Most unfortunate but really quite amusing.

**James** – (after nodding several times, finally falls asleep onto the table, ipod still playing)

**Mr. Smith** - Vicar. My wife and I would like to volunteer for this role.

**Fran** – Vicar can I ask that from now on all the flowers used at the church carry the fair trade mark, otherwise we run the risk of endorsing the shocking conditions in the cut flower industry in Africa and Latin America - workers' health ruined by pesticides on intensive farms, women forced to stand in cold packing sheds snipping blooms for up to 18 hours at a time to meet western demand in peak periods, when everyone must have the exactly the same floral tribute on exactly the same day it's not ethical is it Vicar.

**Vicar** - Mr. Smith has kindly volunteered to undertake in the partaking

of this role. I would like to welcome you on board Mr. Smith as our chief 'free trade' flower arranger. Certainly until the organ pipes are returned to their once wonderful state. I can't wait to hear those old pipes resound once again with the saintly sounds so sweet.

**James** – Sweet like a Chain saw to the head

**Miss Gertrude** - Vicar, there is another role which I would like to offer my services for..

(Pause)

**Vicar** - Please go on Miss Gertrude

**Miss Gertrude** - Oh dear, I can't remember. I am terribly sorry.

**James** - (mobile goes off again, he takes the call stands up and begins to walk out talking loudly) Hey how's it going, .....what now? yer nothing yer I'll meet you there in 5 minutes, I'll grab something on the way, nice one, later.

**Vicar** - Oh dear.

**Miss Gertrude** - Ah yes. Vicar, I would like to volunteer to lead the music while the organ is out of action.

**Vicar** - I see. And what instrument of delight do you play Miss Gertrude? (Mind starts wandering..) The piano? The harp? A small winded instrument? Maybe you're skilled in the fine art of playing the glockenspiel? Or maybe a light touch on an assortment of gentle bells is your forte? I know, you pick up shells from the beach and allow gusts of passing wind to lightly aerate the shells thus providing a light melodic hum..? (looks at Miss G inquiringly)

**Miss Gertrude** - (Dramatic pause). No Vicar. (Pause) I play the drums..

**Vicar** - (almost splutters..) The drums? Ah.. While I appreciate the offer of a sprightly 87 year old lady randomly bashing some skin-covered metal cylindrical and spheroid shapes with small sharp pieces of wood, I'm afraid I will have to decline your kind offer. Now, there is one final thing that we must turn to. Oh dear, this really is most vulgar. We must turn to the small matter of money and donations to the church roof.

**Miss Fenton** - Ooh, is that the time Vicar? Ooh, I'm afraid I've got a Teens against Tesco all night vigil I'm already late for. Bye bye Vicar. (off she goes)

**Miss Gertrude** - Vicar, I must be leaving now. Medication needs to be taken. (shuffles out)

**Vicar** - And you, Mr. Smith?

**Mr. Smith** - (mumbling). I, er, well, you know, I, erm, the thing is, I, erm.. (rushes hurriedly out of the room, looking bashful and embarrassed).

**Vicar** - (turns to the audience). Oh dear. What about you, have you got anything to give?

END. (Applause! Please..!)

### Questions to think about

1. Do we value people of all ages in church, or do we resort to stereotypes? This question is equally for young people's attitudes towards 'old' or 'older' people, as well as older people's attitudes towards teenagers.
2. What makes up 'church'? Do we do things that aren't essential while missing out on our real calling?
3. What are we prepared to give or give up for Jesus?