

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN

MINUTES

Meeting of the Parochial Church Council

Tuesday 23 February 2021

8.00pm on Zoom

PRESENT:

Revd Andy Finn in the chair

Revd Mark Bridgen, Revd Anne Bourne, Daphne Harrison (LLM),

Alison Bull, Rachel Wigley, Stuart Wigley, Ronnie Todd,

Susan Allender, Alison Bull, Simon Bull, Karen Forster-Pearce, Richard Gibson, Jane Ibbotson, Margaret Nicholas, Charlotte Rakhit, Barry Sharp, Bennet Smith, Sarah Stott,

1 Passage of Scripture and Prayers

The meeting opened with a bible passage and prayer.

As it was the Vicar's first PCC meeting with us, he asked each of the PCC members in turn to say how they see the role of the PCC.

He concluded that the PCC consists of Trustees, Elected Representatives, Parish Representatives, Fabric Committee, Mission and Outreach, amongst other things. He emphasised that, as mentioned in the opening bible passage, Jesus does what he sees his Father doing. We must do the same.

2 Apologies

Ali Wakefield

3 To approve Minutes of Meeting 19 January 2021

The Minutes were agreed as a true copy by those present and will be signed by Revd Andy Finn.

4 Matters Arising: Deanery Prayer Link Representative

Bennet reminded everyone of the Deanery Synod meeting reported at the last meeting where Mrs Judith Howard, a licensed Parochial Assistant, spoke about the Deanery prayer link, published each month and sent to the clergy for use and distribution in their parishes.

She asked for clergy in each parish to appoint a representative for prayer and to send their contribution by the 10th of each month. There are two meetings a year for the group of praying reps.

It was agreed that it would be sensible for someone from our prayer and bible study group to be appointed. Daphne will discuss it with the group when they meet on Monday.

5 Finance, to include approval of Draft Annual Accounts before the APCM

Stuart Wigley had circulated the Draft Accounts and Treasurer's report in advance of the meeting. He then went through the various headings:

Income for 1/1/2020 - 1/12/2020 is down £30k

We had three legacies in 2019 and one in 2020

Income from Weddings is down from £7k to £750

Expenditure continues with the Parish Share staying the same as 2019

Facilities and Insurance are slightly down

Cost of organists is down as church services have been mostly on Zoom

There have been some quite expensive roof repairs.

Expenditure for 2020 = £76k

Expenditure for 2019 = £84k

The Church Repair fund and Church Hall Repair Fund have increased as they have not been called upon.

We have a quinquennial inspection in March and we are in a good position going forward into that.

Stuart will be looking at mission with Andy.

The lunch club income was curtailed at the beginning of last year due to the pandemic.

The legacies received will be going towards church lighting and decoration.

A £5k Covid fund from the Diocese was applied for and has been received.

Stuart advised that he will be looking to increase regular monetary contributions and will also review our finances in June to see whether it is possible to improve our Parish Share contribution.

Stuart informed the meeting that the Accounts will be sent to the Independent Examiner for him to review and sign off in good time before the APCM.

Members were invited to ask any questions.

In reply to a question from Alison, Stuart explained there was a typo on P.2 which he will correct before they are sent to the Independent Examiner

Mark asked what voluntary income consists of.

Stuart explained that it is one off donations from various sources, rather than regular giving.

Mark also asked what fees collected in an Agency Capacity means?

Stuart replied that if we have a charity collection in church, the money collected passes through us as an agent and then is forwarded on to the nominated charity. It is a simple record of what was collected for the specific charity. Sometimes it is banked and sometimes the person representing the charity takes the cash after the service.

The PCC were then asked to approve the Accounts before they are sent to the Independent Examiner.

Proposed by: Bennet Smith

Seconded by: Barry Sharp

All content

The two documents on giving, which had been sent to the PCC before the meeting, were then discussed.

The Vicar explained that the document on ways to give, prepared by Stuart, will be added to the church website and the letter from the Vicar will be sent to the congregation, sent direct from his email address.

Sarah Stott thought it was an excellent letter and Stuart's document shows easy ways for people to give and is a good prompt to everyone that we still need to contribute to church funds.

It would be a good idea to remind people about using Easyfundraising when making on-line purchases, where we can nominate St Mary's as a charity. Stuart explained that it also applies to purchases through smile.amazon.co.uk where Amazon will donate 0.5% to St Mary's. Stuart will liaise with Margaret to put something in the news sheet.

6. Church Services & events

The Vicar informed the meeting that they are looking to open the church in March/April. It will be a gradual transition from Zoom to in church during holy week and Easter.

There are many benefits with Zoom and we will be staying with Zoom for the Compline services on Wednesday evenings and possibly using it for PCC meetings in the winter months.

There is also the possibility of having a hybrid system, as they do in St Luke's. We could start with Maundy Thursday where we have a small group in church (say 20-25) and Zoom the service for those not wishing/able to go into church. The same could stand for Easter Sunday.

On Palm Sunday, Andy has arranged for the Sunday Club to put on a drama production. He will then remain in church, on his own, for a streamed communion service.

Barry Sharp asked whether singing will be allowed in church. Andy replied that it is currently under review but, at the moment, singing is not allowed in groups, only a soloist singer/cantor is allowed. Andy believes we should take the music issue a step at a time and keep with the music on Zoom for the time being, which works well.

The question of whether the WiFi signal will work was raised and it was confirmed by Stuart and Andy that having tested it on separate occasions, several times, it is working OK. It was suggested we could have a combination of readings and intercessions done from wherever the reader/intercessor happens to be, in church or on Zoom.

It was asked whether we could have an organist in church for Easter Sunday. Andy agreed to look into the possibility with Stuart.

The subject of decorating the church for Easter and the practicality and expense of providing lilies in memory of loved ones, as in previous years, was discussed. A giving page was suggested as an option for people to pay for a lily. Bennet mentioned that it is very expensive to decorate the cross in church. Alternatively, it was suggested that the flower arrangers could decorate the window sills, as was done at Christmas and worked really well. The Vicar and Churchwardens will discuss all the options.

The next step in returning to church after Easter will begin with the 8.00am service, as a solely physical service, with a mixture of services going forward subsequently.

Margaret Nicholas asked whether the 8.00am could be reinstated before Easter as only a few go. The subject of heating was discussed as the church will be cold and takes several hours to reach a reasonable heat. Andy said he was mindful of people who would like to see the 8.00am restarted. Perhaps we could have the first one in the middle of March and another one prior to Easter and see how it goes. We should ask the people wishing to attend to dress up to keep warm.

Andy agreed to consider all the comments and suggestions.

The services in church will be:

Palm Sunday - 28 March

Maundy Thursday - 1 April

Good Friday - 5 April - 10.30 am and 2.00 pm

Easter Sunday - 4 April

Andy will look into palm crosses; whether we ask people to make them or decorate windows for palm Sunday, as was done for Advent.

As we are unable to walk in a group on Easter Morning, Bennet made the suggestion that individuals walk on their own and then return to breakout rooms for breakfast. Something else to think about!

Margaret Nicholas asked whether we will be producing Easter cards. The delivery shouldn't be a problem and it would be an opportunity for Andy to introduce himself to the Parish. Everyone thought it essential to be in contact with the Parish at the moment. Andy, Bennet and Margaret to liaise re card design etc.

7. Church Fabric

Mosaics - The survey of the mosaics has been done. A report will be issued next week. A faculty will then be applied for. We will then look at finding some additional funding for lighting.

Church Clock - The clock unfortunately is still not working. Stuart is liaising with the two companies who installed the arrester and the pendulum and winding mechanism.

The plaque acknowledging Geoff Holland and Doris Gosnold is yet to be ordered.

Andy thanked Stuart for all the work he is putting in on Church Fabric. He realises Stuart is doing it all on his own at the moment but hopes that a Church Fabric Team can be put together in the near future.

8. Safeguarding

Susan Allender began by saying that she is looking at the training programme for everyone and asked that each person look at the schedule and take responsibility for initiating their training. Ronnie will forward the link to everyone for the Safeguarding course C0. We do really need to keep on top of safeguarding training and DBS checks and it will help if everyone could keep on top of their own without being sent reminders.

9. West Sevenoaks Team Ministry Matters

Mark reminded everyone that we need to elect members to the Joint Council and nominations are needed before the APCM. Ronnie has the application forms for anyone who is interested. Please let Andy or Mark know.

In future, Mark, Anne and Andy will be attending one another's PCC meetings but not their Standing Committee meetings. It is all part of the team membership.

Team clergy meet together every Monday morning in their respective churches. They also meet with certain groups. An invitation will be extended to those with Licences to attend these meetings.

As a result of the reflections/responses from all three parishes, a two page document has been put together and will be sent by email to each of the three congregations. It looks at the life and priorities of the team and our future together.

Mark informed the PCC that from now on there will be a permanent item on the Agenda for each PCC to discuss Team Ministry matters.

We will be working together on finance and there will be a paper on how we can do this. Also, there will be papers on team worship and occasionally an article for the newsletter.

Everyone should have received an email informing them of a team meeting to be held on 15 June. The new team curate (Steve Osei-Mensah) will be in attendance. One of the requirements in having a Curate is that those in the Curate Training Department of the Diocese come to offer a short presentation on what it means to have such a Curate, what PCC's can expect from them and what they can expect from the churches in which they serve that curacy. As Steve will be licensed as Curate to the whole Team, a joint meeting of all three PCC's is needed for this to take place. The

Diocesan part may take between 30 to 45 minutes and so a social dimension will be added to the meeting. For around fifteen minutes or so there will be break out rooms where PCC members from all three churches can mix and get to know one another.

On 23 May at 2.00pm there will be a team confirmation service. If we know of anyone who would like to be confirmed, please let Andy know their names.

Anne then told the meeting that she will be holding a remembrance service on 23 March to mark the one year anniversary since the first lockdown. It will be held at St Luke's. People are invited to bring a flower (daffodil) or a candle. Details will be sent to Margaret for the notice sheet.

10. Outreach & Mission

Dunton Green Initiative - Daphne reported that there is nothing to be added since our last meeting. Phil and Kathy have been in contact with Andy and he will be looking at ways of working together with them.

Charitable Giving - Andy told the meeting that at the Standing Committee it was agreed no charities will be nominated to be voted on at the APCM this year. We need to look at our own giving at the moment and put that in order. We will come back to our charitable giving in the future. It was pointed out that we do donate on a regular annual basis to Poverty & Hope, SKET, Kent Churches and the Childrens' Society. We also donate regularly to the food bank via our Loaves and Fishes collections as well as the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal.

11. Sunday Club/Teenagers

There was no information as Ali had not been able to attend.

Andy reported on his time with Sunday Club a couple of weeks ago and how much he had enjoyed his time with them. The children and leaders are really excited about the Easter drama and other activities up to summer.

12. Any Other Business

Church Website - Andy informed the PCC that Robert McIntock would like to give up responsibility for the church website as he has been doing it now for several years. Andy has spoken to Simon Bull who has agreed to take it on. Simon will be putting forward new ideas in the coming weeks.

APCM 18 April - Andy reminded everyone that we will be holding our APCM in church, after the 9.30am service. Ronnie has emailed a request for reports to be sent to her by 26 March.

Three PCC members will be standing down, having completed their three year term. They are: Charlotte Rakhit, Susan Allender and Ali Wakefield. Andy thanked them for their service over the last three years.

Susan agreed to be co-opted back on, in her position as Safeguarding Officer.

Ronnie informed the meeting that Michele Cooke has agreed to come on to the PCC and will be the representative for the Sunday Club in her position as a Sunday Club Leader.

Church Hall - Margaret Nicholas asked if she could raise the matter of Church Hall bookings. There have been many enquiries asking when the church hall will re-open. Do we have to wait until May/June? It was noted that it will depend on the type of organisation - e.g. anything to do with children/child care may be back earlier. However, it was felt that our hall bookings will have to wait until the time agreed for opening by the Government. Margaret's suggestion to send an email to the regular users to ask if they would like to book their usual slots to put in the diary was agreed.

14. Date of Next Meeting

APCM 18 April 2021

The meeting ended with the Grace