

ST. MARY'S RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VESTRY CHURCH MEETING
HELD ON SUNDAY 27 APRIL 2014
ST. MARY'S CHURCH RIVERHEAD
AT 11.15.A.M.

Present:

Revd Martin Booth (Vicar of St. Mary's)
Mr Barry Sharp (Churchwarden for St. Mary's)
Mr John Curtis (Churchwarden for St. Mary's)
Mrs Ronnie Todd (Secretary)

And approximately 30 Church members.

VESTRY MEETING

The Vicar welcomed everybody to the meeting.

Election of Churchwardens:

Nominations had been received for the two Churchwardens, Barry Sharp and John Curtis, who will serve for the year 2014-2015.

The Vestry meeting ended at 11.20 a.m.

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1. Apologies for Absence:

Margaret Holman, Colin & Mary Butson, The Lovelock Family, Ian Smith, Bennet Smith, Jean Knaggs, Denis & Diane Williams, Robin Tong, Doris Gosnold, Bruce Dorbon, Mark & Sarah Stott

2. To Approve Minutes of APCM held on 27th April 2014:

The Minutes were agreed and signed by the Vicar as a true copy.

3. Matters arising:

There were no matters arising.

4. To receive Electoral Roll

Margaret Nicholas gave the number for the 2013 electoral roll. The number is down by seven from last year's numbers but we have gained two. The electoral roll will be re-opened for any more newcomers. Margaret emphasised the importance for regular attenders to complete an electoral roll form.

Margaret made an appeal to those present for more servers and sidesmen.

5. Vicar's Report

The Vicar's report was attached with the other reports.

The Vicar began by saying how extremely grateful he is to all who put so much work into looking after the church.

He concurred with Margaret Nicholas' point that it is important for everyone to complete a form for the electoral roll. However, that is not to say we are worried about numbers, it is more important to make sure we concentrate on personal prayer, pastoral care and church services.

It is very sad to have lost a number of dearly loved congregation members over the past year. We shall cherish their memories.

Special thanks were given to those leaving specific roles this year, in particular David Holmes and Ruth Merson who gave long and valuable service to the Sunday School. God bless them for their sterling work over the years. It does mean we have two vacancies and the Vicar asked those present

to think about helping and asking others to help. The Sunday School needs both leadership and sitting with the children for three Sundays per month. We must remember it is an important aspect of our worship and is the future of St Mary's church.

The Vicar was particularly pleased to have welcomed the Hermitage Ensemble to perform in St Mary's. He believes we have learned a lot from holding the event. It is good to have an event such as this once in a while.

We now have a link with Estonia and look forward to hosting a joint celebration of music and worship with them in October. The Vicar explained that he is the Chair of the Estonian Link because of his family connection with the country. Those from St Mary's who would like to visit would be very welcome and the Vicar told the meeting that he would be more than happy to arrange introductions. He is hoping a visit can be arranged for the choir from St Mary's in order to develop the relationship.

The Christmas Tree Festival goes from strength to strength. We had in excess of 200 visiting the church over the weekend.

Our new organist Edwin Davis and his family were welcomed. It was a real joy to have them with us. The Vicar thanked Janet once again for her dedication to leading the music of St Mary's for over 20 years. She continues to lead the youth music group.

With regard to the future, we are actively pursuing the development of the welcome area at the back of the church. The youth policy is being given serious consideration with the possibility of sharing initiatives with St Luke's and St Mary's Kippington and encouraging our youngsters to join in with them.

The Vicar ended his report by thanking the congregation for their support and prayers.

6. Financial Report and Accounts and Treasurer's Report:

Stuart Wigley gave the report in his capacity as Hon Treasurer. The Accounts were attached to the Minutes.

Stuart told the meeting that it had been a rewarding first year for him in his new position.

Our income unfortunately has dropped by 4%. He explained that our income is made up of 75% voluntary contributions, 12% church hall and 13% church fees and fund raising. Our outgoings include contributions to the Diocesan Parish Share, Stipend, utilities and admin. The Parish Share and Stipend will both increase this year. Parish Share by 20% and Stipend by 1%.

The electoral roll has dropped by 29% since 2011.

On the up side, we have changed bank accounts which will save on charges. The providers of utilities have been changed to give us more reasonable charges. The contract for the photocopier has also been changed and will save us £550.

Stuart expressed his thanks to Elaine Hanham for the smooth handover and to Margaret Nicholas for all her help.

Those present were asked to put forward any questions they may have.

Q. Geoff Holland asked why there is so much of an increase to the Parish Share.

A. Because it is based on our accounts provided to the Diocese.

Q. Robert McLintock asked whether the electoral roll affects our Parish Share contribution

A. Unsure. The figures on which the decision is based are related to church attendance in October. So it includes such things as our Harvest Festival service in October; as it does for every parish. Stuart was asked to check the Diocesan Website.

The Vicar advised that the Diocese are centralising more of their finances than ever before. For instance, if the Parish need a Curate it doesn't necessarily have to be funded by the Parish.

Q. Jean Woods asked whether we could keep a separate Parish Register.
The Vicar took her point on board.

Q. Velma asked why are the numbers based on the Harvest Festival service.
A. The Vicar replied that these are the Diocese Rules. We could annotate in our returns that the numbers are higher than our normal congregation.

Q. Warren Perry asked whether we could negotiate with the Diocese.
A. Elaine Hanham replied that if we are able to afford the payment then we should pay it to help those who are unable to.
The Vicar suggested that the subject be discussed at a PCC meeting.

Q. Robert McLintock asked whether our Parish Fund acquires interest.
A. Yes.

The Accounts were then agreed.

Proposed: Margaret Nicholas
Seconded: Elaine Hanham
Everyone present voted in favour

7. Churchwardens' Report:

John Curtis advised the meeting that there is not much to add to the Churchwardens' written report. He asked if there were any questions.

There were no questions.

The Vicar thanked the Churchwardens for all that they do, together with others who do so much behind the scenes.

John Curtis replied that he would particularly like to draw attention to all the work done by Diane Williams and Martin Perry who headed up the Fabric Committee.

8. Deanery Synod Report:

The two DS members for the coming year are: Anne Straight and Margaret Nicholas. Anne had prepared the report and asked for any questions to be directed to her. There were no questions.

The Vicar mentioned that Sevenoaks was a well-attended and active Deanery.

9. Parish Reports:

All the Parish Reports were attached to the 2013 APCM Minutes.

- a) Sunday School: David Holmes had prepared the report. He told the meeting that he and Ruth had found their time as leaders very rewarding. He hoped that it would continue. Unfortunately, the children have lots of other activities and distractions. All the Sunday School leaders have done a fantastic job. He made an appeal for additional support in light of Ruth and him retiring. Anyone interested was asked to speak to David. There were no questions from the floor.
- b) Littlecourt Lunch Club: Report prepared by Pamela Rankin. It was stated that the Lunch Club are in need of another cashier and more cooks. There were no questions from the floor. The Vicar thanked all who help with the lunch club including those who partake.

- c) Tots and Toddlers: Diane Williams had prepared the report on behalf of the team. It was observed that the weekly sessions keep us in touch with the community and also brings people in to church from time to time. There were no questions from the floor.
- d) Church Hall Report: Margaret Nicholas had prepared the report. Elaine Hanham asked whether the hall was in line to be updated this year. Margaret replied that it was not scheduled for this year but she plans to discuss it with the PCC. Robert McLintock asked what the total cost of repair was to the hall. Margaret replied that it had cost £1500. All costs were paid by the Insurance Company. The Vicar thanked Margaret for all her sterling work in getting the hall back up and running very quickly after the vandalism.
- e) Music Report: Janet Sharp had prepared the report. Janet told the meeting that it had been an immense privilege to have played the organ and she will miss it very much. She does now enjoy singing in the choir though and is still leading the young music group. She is planning an annual award for members of the music group. As always, we are still short of voices in the choir and it would be great to have more. We want to keep up the tradition. Edwin has lots of ideas. Janet thanked everyone for their support over the years. There were no questions from the floor. The Vicar thanked Janet and Edwin for their contributions.
- f) Mothers' Union Report: Karen Forster-Pearce had prepared the report. Karen advised the meeting that they are looking for new members. She thanked the Vicar for his support and his suggestion of starting a bible study. Karen also thanked Margaret Nicholas for putting a regular notice in the mini-mag and the Landmark. There were no questions from the floor.
- g) Events Committee Report: Margaret Curtis had prepared the report. Margaret thanked everyone for their support of the events throughout the year. They are always successful. The Vicar told Margaret we were very grateful for the work she puts in to organising the various events.
- h) Child Protection: Zoe Bromwich had prepared the report. Rosemary McLintock suggested we should have Zoe's details on display in Sunday School and in church. Margaret Nicholas agreed to prepare a laminated notice. Rosemary expressed her thanks to Zoe for taking on the position of Child Protection Officer. Janet Sharp asked whether she needs her CRB check renewed as she believed it was out of date. Rosemary told Janet she would check.

10. Election of the PCC:

The following six names were put forward for election to the PCC to replace the resignations:-

Karen Forster-Pearce
 Jean Woods
 Margaret Curtis
 Diane Williams
 Nicola Joyce
 Robin Tong

Everyone present voted in favour.

11. Election to Deanery Synod

Anne Straight was content to continue again for the next three years.
 Margaret Nicholas' name was put forward for election.

Everyone present voted in favour.

12. Election of Sidespersons

The list of Sidespersons was read out.

Everyone present voted in favour.

13. Election of Examiner of Church Accounts:

Ruth Merson was elected as Church Examiner for the Accounts for 2014/15.

Proposed: Stuart Wigley

Seconded: Barry Sharp

All in favour

(Note: Ruth Merson stepped down from the role soon after the meeting as she realised she had a conflict of interest inasmuch as she was a member of the PCC when some of the financial decisions were made. It is hoped she will take the role of Church Examiner from 2015)

14. AOB:

The subject of the Ryedale Development was discussed. Welcome leaflets were delivered to 50 homes which were occupied. Jeanette Francis was thanked for helping to deliver them. Audrey Bernardi advised the meeting that two baptisms have happened as a result.

Two families have started coming to church after attending the Sunday School/Baptism Families Picnic.

The three Charities chosen for the 2014 outreach collections are:

BLESMA

Lollipops

Tonbridge Autism Centre

Together with the regular Poverty & Hope collection later in the year.

15. To Discuss the Date and Time of Vestry and APCM 2014

The date for the 2014 APCM will be 12 April 2015

(Note: this was later revised to 19 April)

The meeting closed at approximately 12.15 pm.