

**ST MARY'S CHURCH, RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN  
MINUTES**

**Meeting of the Parochial Church Council  
Tuesday 28 July 2020 @ 8.00pm**

**THE MEETING WAS HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM IN LIGHT OF THE LOCKDOWN SITUATION**

**PRESENT:**

Rachel Wigley (Chair and Churchwarden)

Alison Bull (Churchwarden), Stuart Wigley (Hon Treasurer), Ronnie Todd (Hon Secretary)

Susan Allender, Anne Blakeley, Simon Bull, Daphne Harrison (LLM), Margaret Nicholas, Barry Sharp, Bennet Smith, Sarah Stott,

**1. Passage of Scripture and Prayers**

The meeting began with a passage of scripture and a prayer.

**2. Apologies**

Charlotte Rakhit, Ali Wakefield, Andrew Swidzinski

**3. To agree document re Opening Church for Services and Baptisms**

Alison had circulated a document setting out a proposal for opening the church for services in advance of the meeting.

**Church Services**

We have no incumbent which means we will have to rely on others to preside. It will not be possible to rely on Christopher Johnson or Peter Flynn as neither are able to commit to being in church.

Michael Gentry is happy to continue with officiating one Sunday per month.

Mark Bridgen is happy to take one service per month.

Daphne offered to check the situation with Lynette who has returned from a sabbatical.

One suggestion is to hold a service on a Saturday for a few weeks if we are able to find a Vicar willing to officiate. It is also suggested, as part of the proposal, that we start in October by holding an 8.00am service in church on a Sunday.

Once we start holding services in church on Sundays, we will have to move the Saturday opening for private prayer due to the 72 hour cleansing period.

Each member present was invited to give their comments.

Charlotte -The Secretary read out an email she had received from Charlotte. In principle Charlotte would very much like the church to open as soon as possible but understands the difficulties due to our situation without an incumbent.

Daphne Anne Bourne is always willing to help out but is limited because of her position at St Luke's. Daphne has spoken to Mark Bridgen who is keen to visit the other two Parishes once he has been installed in Kippington. Daphne told the meeting that Kippington will be holding a service outside the church on Sunday with everyone being sent service sheets to print off at home. It will be interesting to see how it works. The proposal from Alison, as it stands, is only the basis of a way forward.

Stuart - People do have the option to attend services in the other two churches. We need to be aware that there could be a second spike of Covid which may result in another lockdown. We just have to look at Leicester. Happy with Alison's proposal to take things slowly.

Ronnie - Agree with Alison's proposal to take things slowly and not rush into church for services. As part of the three Parish Group people do have the opportunity to go to a service in church. The Zoom services work really well and feel comfortable continuing with them for the time being. It is especially difficult for us because we are still in an interregnum. Agree with Stuart's comments that Covid has not disappeared.

Barry - Agree with Charlotte's comments that it will be good to be back in church as soon as possible but, again, understand the difficulties. Happy with the October date and we could at least have the organ played, even though we are unable to sing.

Susan - Think Alison's proposal document is good. We do need to be careful. Don't want to rush into things.

Sarah - Agree we need to take things slowly. We could stay with the same format until November as we need to think of vulnerable people in the congregation. Also, the amount of people allowed in church will have an impact, along with social distancing, wearing masks and taking names for track and trace.

Margaret - Agree with Charlotte's comments but understand it is more difficult without a Vicar. Margaret has enjoyed going to the services at St Luke's but does support Alison's proposal.

Bennet - Agree with Charlotte's comments but also agrees with Alison's proposal that we start services in some form in September and October.

Anne - Unhappy that there is no mention of a 9.30am church service at all in the proposal. St Luke's services are very well organised. Could we not do the same? Anne hopes things will change in August once we have our new Team Rector, Mark Bridgen, on board. Would the Kippington retired clergy be able to help with our services?

Daphne replied that both retired clergy are withdrawing from officiating. However, we will be asking for help from the three parish benefice and will draw up a rota.

The Churchwardens confirmed that once they have spoken to Mark Bridgen, Alison will add a 9.30am Sunday service to the proposal.

Simon Bull - Think it's a good plan. Simon suggested we put 9.30am Sunday services as an item on the Agenda for the 15 September PCC meeting. By then we should have been able to speak to Mark Bridgen.

Barry Sharp asked about the use of the toilets in the church hall if Sunday Club were to use it. Daphne replied that she has not heard what the Sunday Club plans are.

The Churchwardens advised that before anywhere is used a risk assessment is needed.

The subject of outside services was raised. It was suggested we could have a trial outside service in August. It would be best to do it while the weather is fine. A number of 30 people max was suggested. It was agreed we need to look carefully at the numbers given by the C of E compared to those given by the Government. Daphne and the Churchwardens will look into the possibility.

At the end of the discussion everyone was happy with the proposal as set out in the document prepared by Alison.

### **Baptismal Services**

Lynn Wilson, our baptismal contact, has received a number of enquiries regarding baptism services. It was agreed by those present that we would like to facilitate them but the timings need to coincide with private prayer.

Bennet suggested we offer baptisms to follow on from a Sunday service rather than hold separate services.

It was agreed that with current restrictions of numbers allowed in a church service, it wasn't feasible to hold baptisms as part of a church service or to hold more than one baptism at a time.

A proposal was put forward to hold one baptism service in September with an area roped off specifically for use by the baptismal family, and another in October, both happening on a Saturday, at the close of church after the private prayer and service. As the church closes at 12pm on Saturdays, it was agreed 1pm would be a sensible time to allow for the changeover.

There were two questions:

1. Do we want to offer baptism services?
2. Do we agree with the proposal above?

The PCC were all in agreement, subject to approval from Mark Bridgen and locating clergy to officiate.

### **4. To agree dates for PCC Meetings and APCM**

The Secretary read out the list of proposed dates up until the APCM in 2021. A copy of the dates had previously been circulated.

All agreed.

### **5. Announcement and Agreement of Parish Reps**

Rachel Wigley told the meeting the names of the two PCC members given the most votes for appointment as Parish Representatives for inclusion on our panel and the name of the PCC member to be appointed as the Parish Representative for inclusion on the St Luke's panel. These were: Bennet Smith and Susan Allender - St Mary the Virgin Riverhead with Dunton Green  
Charlotte Rakhit - St Luke's church, Sevenoaks

All content

**6. Agreement to advertise for an incumbent (when the time comes)**

It was proposed by the Churchwardens to advertise in the Church Times as well as on Pathways when advertising for a new incumbent.

It is likely the advertisement will be placed in both Pathways and the Church Times in September.

All content

**7. Any Other Business (as agreed before the meeting)**

**Opening the Church Hall**

Margaret Nicholas explained that she has been asked by Jane whether the Hall will be available to use for her dance classes. Amherst School has asked whether it will be available for tutoring. The PTA would also like to use it for coffee mornings.

It was agreed the feasibility of one off events, i.e. parties, was not a good idea and should not be offered.

Margaret Nicholas, Margaret Holman and the Churchwardens will have a separate meeting to discuss the various options.

**Date of Next Meeting:**

Standing Committee	1 September 2020
PCC	15 September 2020

The meeting ended with the Grace