

**ST MARY THE VIRGIN, RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN
MINUTES**

**Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
Monday 20 September 2021
8.00pm in the Church Hall**

PRESENT:

Rev Andy Finn in the chair

Rev Mark Bridgen, Daphne Harrison (LLM),
Alison Bull, Ronnie Todd,
Simon Bull, Michele Cooke, Karen Forster-Pearce, Richard Gibson, Yvonne Holliday, Jane Ibbotson,
Barry Sharp, Sarah Stott,

1 Passage of Scripture and Prayers

The meeting opened with a bible passage and prayer.

2 Apologies

Susan Allender, Stuart Wigley, Rachel Wigley

3 To approve Minutes of Meeting 5 July 2021

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

Proposed: Simon Bull
Seconded: Barry Sharp
All content

4 Matters Arising

Deanery Synod Representatives

The Vicar asked for grateful thanks to be recorded in the Minutes for the time and service given by Margaret Nicholas and Bennet Smith during their period of service on the PCC and as Deanery Synod Representatives.

We do need two people to replace them and the Vicar asked if any of the PCC members present would be willing to take on the job of Deanery Synod rep for our church. There are approximately three meetings per year. Daphne Harrison put herself forward. Daphne was thanked and told that the next meeting is on 18 November. The PCC were asked to prayerfully consider who might take on the PCC roles and to bring any suggestions to Andy.

Churches Together

It was announced by the Vicar that there was a Churches Together Service at the Vine Baptist church on Sunday evening and there will be a Churches Together Advent Service at St Nicholas Church on Sunday, 28 November (more details to follow).

5 Finance

The Treasurer (Stuart Wigley) had sent round a half year review of our financial situation. We are still on target to increase our Parish Share but Stuart had suggested a cautious approach due to the uncertainty of income for the remainder of the year due to Covid infection levels rising.

Stuart's recommendation was to consider increasing our Parish Share by £2,000 per month for October, November and December. This would mean that our annual contribution would be raised from the previous forecast of £12,000 up to £18,000

We have been given two grants, one from the Diocese and one from the Local Authority, to help us through after the effects of the pandemic and loss of income. It was suggested that it seems strange to receive two grants to help our financial situation, to then give it back by increasing our Parish Share.

It was agreed by the PCC to defer a decision until November when Stuart will be back.

A discussion then took place on the amount of work needed to be carried out on the church as a result of the Quinquennial inspection and report and the estimated cost of cleaning the mosaics. A number of issues were raised for church finance such as the Diocesan Share, giving to Charities, Fabric concerns (the roof, mosaics, hall, boiler, rising gas prices) as well as the note that income was falling. It was felt that we needed to discuss the priorities for spending on these items.

Regarding the Quinquennial work, especially work needed on the roof, it was asked whether we could approach the Diocese for their opinion on whether an inspection of the roof could be carried out by a drone.

Andy proposed a vote of thanks to Stuart for the huge amount of work he does for the church, both in his capacity as Treasurer and the work in respect of church maintenance.

6. Church Services & Events

3/10 - Harvest Festival

The Scouts will be in attendance and the food donated will be given to the Food Bank at Dunton Green. The Vicar will advise the Scout Leaders of the food types required for the food bank donations.

1/11 - All Souls

The Vicar needs to move the service to the 7th November as he will not be around on the 1st. The service will be at 3pm and we will have refreshments in the hall.

14/11 - Remembrance

Daphne Harrison will take the service at Dunton Green

28/11 - Advent

Churches Together service being held in St Nicholas Church at 6pm

19/12 - Sunday Club Nativity at 9.30 am. Nine Lessons and Carols - time to be confirmed.

24/12 - Crib Service and Christingle Service

Limited numbers and attendance by ticket only

24/12 - Midnight Service

25/12 - Christmas Day Service – 8 o'clock and 9:30am

26/12 – Boxing Day – No 8 o'clock but a 9:30am service.

Events

19/9 - Riverhead Carnival

It was an enjoyable and successful day. Many thanks to all who helped and all who made donations to our stall. We raised £346.65.

11 & 12/12 - Christmas Tree Festival

We really need to have more volunteers to help with the organisation as we will be missing two people who did an awful lot towards the running of the event. The Vicar will put a plea for volunteers to help and report back before 10 October as emails and letters need to be sent out well in advance to potential exhibitors.

Church Christmas Card - Rev Mark Bridgen made the suggestion that we use the same printing company as St Mary's, Kippington.

7. Church Fabric

This was dealt with under Finance above.

8. PCC as Trustees

The PCC had been requested to sign the "PCC Financial Liability" form at the beginning of the meeting, which is in addition to the Trustee Eligibility Declaration sent out earlier in the year. The Vicar explained to the PCC that we are a charity and are responsible as Trustees and Stewards for the mission of the church and the resources we are given e.g. people, finance and our buildings. We need to keep track of our mission as trustees and encourage one another to keep alert on the decisions we make.

9. Outreach & Mission

The question "What is our Story" was asked by the Vicar. He explained that at the beginning of the year we had a Lent Course and a bible course. They have important stories to tell and we have our own individual stories. But what is our story as a church? He asked for people to get together in pairs to discuss their thoughts and bring them back to the meeting at the end of their discussion. The thoughts were put forward as follows:

Family friendly

Central to the Community

Welcoming to new people

Church family

Support for Riverhead

Passing on our faith

Safe place for people to come

Worship and Prayer

Church hall as a useful meeting place

The Vicar suggested that we are all disciples and part of God's story. The story we live is the story we live out. We need to tell God's story to others as well as reminding ourselves of God's story.

10. Safeguarding

There was nothing new to report except to say that a safeguarding service was planned on 10 October to think about the topic of Safeguarding and to give thanks for Susan as our Safeguarding Officer. Due to a number of issues, this has been postponed to the spring. We will continue to mark Safeguarding Sunday in the prayers but will consider it more at a later service. We must also continue to hold Susan and the family in our prayers as they have been through a difficult time due to Covid.

11. West Sevenoaks Team Ministry Matters

Rev Mark Bridgen advised the PCC that Steve Osei-Mensah, our new team curate, will be ordained on 25 September and a joint welcoming service is being held for him on Sunday 26 September, in St Mary's Church, Kippington. The service starts at 10am and will also be live streamed. People will be asked to wear masks. There will be a joint benefice choir and Sunday Club. Coffee and refreshments will be served after the service. Mark reminded everyone that Steve will not be a full time curate and will be working with us on Wednesdays and Sundays only. He is self-supporting and has a full time job. Anne, Andy and Mark will be offering training to Steve. As he will be serving in the capacity of Deacon he will be unable to consecrate the elements, etc, but will be able provide the same ministry as Daphne does in her capacity as a Lay Minister.

After the letter which went out in July, sub-groups have been formed and will be reporting back to the main team. Everything will be reported to the individual PCCs and will be ratified by the PCCs. Nothing will be taken away from individual PCCs.

As there are two representatives leaving the Joint Council, replacements will be needed. Volunteers will need approval by their PCC but don't need to be a PCC member.

12. Sunday Club/Teenagers/Leadership

The Vicar informed the PCC that the four leaders of Sunday Club have stepped down after five years' service. Thank you to them for their leadership and for holding things together during the interregnum and especially during the pandemic.

Michele and Tamar have taken on the Leadership but will be looking for additional volunteers. Andy confirmed to Michele that any new volunteers do not need to take the Safeguarding Leadership Course. We need to develop and grow worship for the older group/teenagers.

The Pizza and Dessert party at the Vicarage garden were successful.

13. Church Coffee

Serving coffee will be resumed after the Harvest Festival service. It will be in the church hall. It was suggested that people may want to bring their own cups, otherwise we will use the disposable cups for the time being.

Ronnie Todd will put together a coffee servers rota.

4. Any Other Business

The Vicar reported that the Servers (Acolytes) will be back from October. In looking at the role Andy would like them to help with the serving of communion. They will also be asked to help the Vicar with administering the chalices, as has been done by Rachel and Daphne. Those on the list of Acolytes are: James Wigley, Mark and Sarah Stott, Karen Forster-Pearce. It was also noted that Diane, Jill and Pam have helped with administering the chalice in the past.

15. Date of Next Meeting

SC Tuesday 2/11
PCC Monday 15/11

Rev Mark Bridgen closed the meeting with prayer