

Draft minutes of APCM meeting held on 21/05/2021

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

1. Welcome and apologies

Tim welcomed everyone and explained the run of the meeting and that it is, in fact, 3 meetings: the 'Vestry' meeting followed by the main business, including the vision. The last meeting is for the newly elected PCC.

Apologies were received from: Jane and Charlie George, Jean and Fraser Sims, Betty Rootham, Lyn and Alan Lygo, Sheila and John Christophers and Revd Hilary Smart. At the meeting apologies were also received from Gill and David Parker and Liz and Steve Jones.

Tim thanked everyone for being in attendance particularly at this, still difficult time for many.

2. Minutes

Minutes of the previous APCM meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record, having been proposed by Chris Bright and seconded by Ann Jordan. Tim signed the hard copy.

3. Opening prayers

Tim commented that although it is slightly odd to be having this meeting on Pentecost, it is hugely powerful and significant in terms of being a sign of looking for God's Spirit to be with us here. He began by reading 1 Corinthians, Chapter 12, verses 4-13. The reading spoke about the gifts of the Spirit: although there is a variety of gifts, it is the same Spirit. The body does not consist of one member but many. Tim prayed that the Spirit of God activate the skills given to each of us as we aim to see St Paul's continue to build in our community. He asked that God's Spirit fill us with His power and gifts so we become 'living stones'.

4. Election of Wardens

There were two nominations:

Wendy Pearce - proposed by Ann Shephard and seconded by Maureen Hollins.

Charlie George - proposed by Andrew Little and seconded by Ann Shephard.

Both were duly elected and applauded. Tim observed that this is an excellent pairing and the envy of a number of parishes. He prayed for them in their roles and thanked them (Charlie in his absence) for their calling. He asked God to equip them for the year ahead and asked that they find their gifts and service 'life giving'.

APCM

1. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

2. Elections to PCC

There are 3 vacancies. Two nominations were received.

Debbie Caine - nominated by Ann Jordan and seconded by Penny Carrier.

Maureen Hollins - nominated by Ann Shephard and seconded by Charlie George.

Both were duly elected and applauded.

A casual vacancy still remains so Tim asked that if anyone felt called to become a member of PCC, they have a word with him.

3. Election to deanery synod

There are two places but were no nominations.

Tim observed that many see Deanery Synod as an unnecessary burden – he spoke against this view saying It is an opportunity to get the best out of the local churches as they work together. He gave the example of the Pentecost service to be held this evening at Clifton. It can be a strategic way of building partnership so we should not be negative about it.

Tim led prayers for the PCC - he asked that members be equipped individually to have a heart to contribute and shape what they are doing here at St Paul's, to lead and to guide all members of the congregation.

4. Revision of Electoral roll

The Electoral roll currently stands at: 123, 2 down on last year with 1 addition and 3 deaths. As a matter of interest there are 85 women and 35 men on roll, 74 live in the parish and 49 outside.

5. Annual report

a) Accounts

Debbie Caine presented her report in summary form via a powerpoint presentation.

Highlights:

The opening balance in January 2020 was £68.5K. There was a reduction in rental income of £106K obviously largely due to Covid. The largest expenditure was Parish Share at £65K. Giving was about £8K and this, along with that portion of our Parish Share that is also 'given' equates to just over 10% of our income.

Expenditure was about £62K. £17K was for our Children, Youth and Families Worker which was expected and out of an existing fund. £3.5K has been accrued for the new doors and there has been a spend of £1.9K on streaming equipment which will be written off over the next 3 years.

At the end of 2020 there was a General fund surplus of £5.5K which is good news as we were expecting a deficit of £4K. There was a decrease in hall running costs and we did delay some maintenance work highlighted by the quinquennial report.

Looking forward to 2021

General fund expected to break even. Assumes our income will stay similar.

The PCC have agreed to pay a Parish Share of £62K (asked for £66K). There may be implications, long term, if we are unable to meet our full share.

In 2021 we need to the quinquennial work. The surplus we had may be used on the new door and if there is a surplus at the end of 2021, we will use it to top up Parish Share – decision to be made later when the position is clearer.

The Children, Youth and families Worker Fund is a designated fund currently standing at £30K which will enable funding until 2022. New grant funding is now being sought which we might have to match.

i) Any questions

Mary Griffiths – Asked about the Maundy Fund which is a restricted fund. Mary was concerned that since there was no Maundy supper this year there was also no corresponding collection – has the PCC considered this fund? Tim responded that the PCC is mindful of what needs to be done with the restricted funds and if they need to be topped up. Currently we are looking at the possibility of having a Community fund to give directly to those in need and to do things in and for the community. As yet there are no new criteria.

Margaret Oldroyd - Noted Debbie referred to ‘implications of not meeting our Parish Share – what are these? Tim answered. There would be no short term implications but long term, if St Paul’s couldn’t effectively afford to pay for its own minister there would be a discussion about whether we would receive a new Vicar if/when Tim leaves. A significant portion of the share is given to support the wider church.

Bob Oldroyd confirmed that our failure to meet Parish Share would have implications for other parishes in the deanery. Historically St Paul’s has been very generous and the ripple down effect of us not meeting share would be even worse for them.

Debbie Caine confirmed that the whole deanery is meant to come up with a given amount. Talking about how we can do this. Different ways have been looked at as to how this can be allocated. Many churches are seeing funds contract so we are not sure what the future holds but will continue discussion about how we can support each other.

Tim - we should have no fear - God has a plan for us that is sustainable.

There were no further questions.

Gratitude was expressed to Debbie on behalf of the meeting for all the work she does.

ii) Acceptance of accounts

It was proposed by Hugh Williams and seconded by Cliff Carrier that the accounts be accepted.

There were no objections.

iii) Appointment of independent examiner

Bob Oldroyd nominated and Hazel Little seconded that Eddie George be appointed as the independent examiner.

There were no objections.

b) Any other questions or concerns

There were no further questions or concerns.

6. Vision

Tim introduced this section by confirming that we have been thinking about this since January and a copy of the vision document is available on the website. It is a way of understanding a framework to hold up all we do - should be doing this? We have a clear and broad vision but it will depend on how we implement it.

We are currently restarting the work of the Church and there are 3 main areas of focus: children's work, hospitality and welcome. This is quite strategic in terms of welcoming the community. The previous sidesperson role will be more focussed on welcome. The children and young people's team will be expecting to focus more on mental health and well being within the community. We will need to see all of us stepping up to support this work when we can, it will involve training and safeguarding. This will not be driven by a paid role but by volunteers. It has become increasingly difficult to get funding from anyone to do our work for us in the current funding environment. The role has to be more outward looking towards our local community.

Tim challenged us all to think about being members of these teams.

Questions:

Tim asked how safe we feel about coming to Church. Our aim is to gradually walk our way out of Covid restrictions. So how safe do you feel?

Mike Spalton - very safe.

Tim - What about if no one was wearing masks and sitting side by side.

Mike - not sure.

Janet Coleman - very safe now but not if we were all packed together.

Tim asked what is it that makes you feel safe?

Ann Jordan - The spacing of chairs. Charlie has done a super job in organising it all.

Camilla Gilmore - Concerned over bringing back the children as they are unable to social distance in the same way. (Her concern is for others)

Ann Jordan - We should always make allowances for children.

Carol Williams - Would appreciate it if we keep sanitising measures in place, gel etc.

Roz Donovan - Observed that people's views about sharing of the peace will be very different.

Margaret Oldroyd - Agreed with the previous comment and suggested there should be a discussion about it.

Sue Cook - Felt it a shame older people have lost their confidence and suggested this needs to be rebuilt.

Tim responded that we will leave the chairs as they are for the foreseeable future. He accepted that the Peace will require discussion and will need different responses to it. For

example, if you are a hugger you will need to check and respect how other people want to be greeted.

Tim carried out quick straw poll - How would you feel about communion with the common cup? A show of hands: comfortable - 7, not comfortable - 12, with a number not showing hands.

Vision – what we are looking forward to under each of the 3 headings; **experience**, **explore** and **engage**. All are needed for a growing, vibrant Church.

Experience

Today, 7pm at Holy Trinity at Clifton there will be a service outside to celebrate Pentecost. This is the start of a monthly service of evening praise and worship.

St Paul's is a place that holds the contemplative and charismatic There will be a Soul Spark spirituality course in the autumn led by Jean Sims.

Midlands based artist has been asked to display some artwork on our walls for periods of 2 weeks.

There will be a #100 hearts exhibition and service in November. The All Souls service will be an opportunity to remember all those lost over this period.

There will be an Alpha course.

Tim asked - what do you want to see at St Paul's?

Ann Jordan - take the church out into the community

Glenys Duce - worship groups

Carol Williams - social groups

Hugh Williams - the above would be a chance to bring in people who are not here already

Explore

Unless our faith challenges us, we are not really walking the path of Christ. If we are inviting them in we have to be strong.

Activity church - eg running, cycle church.

Tim asked - What would you like to see at St Paul's

Camilla Gilmore - working with children and young people, answering their questions helps to: define, deepen and strengthen your own faith. It is nothing to be scared of and should be encouraged.

Juliette Khan - learning to pray. There are times we feel close to God and sometimes distant. We need to be able to make that connection both in private and public. Practice of prayer in the Church.

Engaging

Authentic community is that if one person suffers, we all suffer. It is only when that challenge of community is met then we offer something people can't get anywhere else.

Yesterday we had first pop-up cafe - fun and good conversation

We have applied for £10k grant to set up a proper cafe in the kitchen kitchen/lounge

Offer social eating - to prepare, make and share food.

Tim asked - What do you want to see at St Paul's?

Hugh Williams - Barn dance

Bob Oldroyd - Joked that he knows a number of golfers and cricketers, given his interests but they too sometimes need a listening ear

What we need to do then is engage with the financial situation of the Church. We need to give generously and trust in God. We need funding for the cafe, projector, sound system, front doors, signage, children and young people's work, building and maintenance, Parish Share.

7. Final comments

Going back to the reading. We are the Church and it is the activation of our gifts that will help this Church move forward. Pray for the Spirit to show you what you can and will bring to St Paul's.

Final reminder about this evening's service.

8. Closing prayer

Tim finished in prayer using words from the 9am Pentecost service.

He prayed a prayer of blessing over us.

Final comment from Wendy Pearce – Church Warden. On behalf of the Church she extended thanks to Tim, as well as his family, for all he has done in these unprecedented times. This could not have been part of any training he received. We very much appreciate everything.

Signed as a true and accurate record

Tim Fox

vicar

2022