

**ST MARY'S CHURCH,
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

*Minutes of the meeting of the PCC on Monday 21 May 2018
at 8 p.m. in the Upper Room*

1. Opening Prayer

Rev'd Paul welcomed the new members of the PCC and the meeting began with the first part of Compline.

2. Members Present

Rev'd Paul White (Rev'd Paul); Martin Massy (MM); Barbara Smith (BS); Francis Griffiths (FG); Val Newell (VN); Kelly Parsons (KP); NC; Kirsty Finch (KF); David Gater (DG); Judy Gater (JG); Jenny Hopkins (JH); Julia Miles (JM); Rachel Packham (RP); Michael Payne (MP); Annie Young (AY);

Minutes : Linda Yabsley (LY)

3. Apologies for absence

Rev'd Nicola Harvey; Katerina Nixon; Mark Totty

4. Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings held on 20th March 2018 and 29th April 2018(APCM)

The Minutes of the meetings held on 20th March and 29th April had been circulated by email for approval and as there were no amendments, the Minutes were formally approved and signed by Rev'd Paul.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Rev'd Paul asked if there were any matters arising from the Minutes which would not be covered under Agenda Items. Nothing was raised by the members.

6. Report from Treasurer (DG)

DG informed the meeting that Alan Knowles had stepped down and Duncan Murray is now confirmed as Book-keeper. The figures for the 3 months to the end of March are available and as is normal, and not unexpected, our expenditure has exceeded income.

With regard to the appeal for an increase in voluntary giving to meet the deficit at the end of year, DG reported that so far increases in giving amount to £400 per month. This is not as much as we had hoped for (added to which with a decrease in regular giving, the amount of Gift Aid we receive will decrease). Our shortfall at the end of the year would be £3.5 - £4k, unless giving and fundraising increased. DG therefore emphasised to the meeting that expenditure must be closely monitored.

In November DG had flagged up the low level of Reserves and if we did have a deficit of say £4k at the end of 2018, it would be possible to take this out of Reserves, but obviously we could not do this for 3 years running. Also, DG pointed out that we may need funds to meet costs arising from the Quinquennial Inspection in June.

He raised the following possible solutions:

- A full scale stewardship campaign - but he would not recommend this for the current year in view (a) of the response from the congregation and community to the request for an increase in voluntary giving which has already been made; and (b) the generous response from the congregation to several specific appeals relating to Kibakwe parish needs.
- If at the end of 2018 we have a deficit of £4k, and the Reserves had therefore been reduced to £8k, we should consult with the Diocese regarding a reduction of, say, £4k in the Parish Pledge Contribution. This would not be an excessive amount but it would reduce our ongoing expenditure so that the deficit would not be repeated.
- DG remarked that his report was not a very optimistic one, but this is only the first quarter and with a tight rein on expenditure, he will keep the PCC updated each meeting.

The following points arose from a discussion following the Finance Report:

- There were not many areas of discretionary spending which could be reduced;
- The PCC would prefer not to have to reduce the Parish Pledge;
- Rather than a general request for increased giving, money needed for a particular project normally provides a better response, as people like to contribute to something specific.
- The possibility of having a notice detailing the amount needed to run the church per day, which would be placed near the visitors book, with a donation box.

Rev'd Paul acknowledged JH's statement that she would be unhappy for the church to give the impression that we were charging people to come into church. FG pointed out that many people would not consider the Parish Pledge as a cost of running the church.

Taking these points into account, Rev'd Paul and Janice Massy would come up with suitable wording for this notice and report back to the next meeting.

7. **Committee structure for the new PCC year**

JG read out the names for the Standing, Education, Fundraising and Outreach and World Mission Committees.

There were no amendments to these and NC opted to join the Standing Committee. JG will circulate a master list to PCC members.

Education

KP informed the meeting that the Beacon Service was doing well and about 40 people had attended the first Messy Church. The next one is on 10th June. The Committee had discussed the young people's groups on Sundays, and felt that a third group was now needed. So starting in September we would have a third group meeting on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. This would cater for the young people of secondary school age but too young for Y's Up. Volunteers are needed to help and Rev'd Paul suggested that a request was put out to the wider congregation. KP informed the meeting that she and Cathy Brill would prepare all the materials for, say, the next twelve months so that any volunteers would only have to concentrate on running the meeting.

Rev'd Paul expressed the opinion that, in principle, this was a good idea and the meeting approved the creation of this group, starting in September.

Fabric

MM commented on the following items:

- With regard to the Display Unit, the notice board has been removed and the Unit is due to be installed this week, although minus the panels.
- The sound system has been upgraded with new microphones and receivers and a new console. There are no controls on the unit and it is controlled by a separate iPad. A training session will be arranged for those who need it.
- John Knowles had repaired the ceiling in the upper room. He also checked that the rest of the ceiling was safe. He had explained to MM the possible cause of the problem (the door banging shut over the years) and MM has asked him to put a door closer on the door.
- Next Quinquennial Inspection is 4th June and will be carried out by a new Architect from Thomas Ford and Partners, as previous one has now retired.

Costs:

1. Ceiling repair £1,362.58 (incl VAT £227.09 which we cannot reclaim) - will be submitting invoice as part of insurance claim
2. Upgrade of sound system - quote £2,719 +VAT = £3,262.80 (we cannot reclaim VAT)
3. A donation of £3k has been received for this work and therefore there is a small amount of £262.80 to be paid.
4. MM asked for the PCC approval to spend the additional £262.80 on the system and this was given.
5. Wi-fi audio bridge so that not need a cable to iPad - quote £374 (fitted)+VAT = £448.80

MM then asked for views on getting the wi-fi bridge. The general consensus was that the bridge would be very useful for those who use the sound system and allow more flexibility for young peoples' services. NC raised the question of requiring a log in code for the system so that it could not be accidentally accessed by a member of the congregation using their smart phone. This would be looked into.

IT WAS AGREED that the cost of the wi-fi bridge would be split between the fund for young people's work and the Church Repair Fund.

On a general note, it was felt that the sound system was much improved and on the subject of the intercessions from the lectern at the front of the church, it was agreed that this should continue.

MM drew attention to the fact that the bell ropes and pulleys need replacing. One of ringers has donated £1,200 towards the total cost of replacement (since identified as £1,800 approx. on which VAT cannot be reclaimed). So the balance is £600 and the VAT is £320. MM suggested that the church should support the ringers and this would help us to show them how much we value them and proposed that we make up the difference between total cost and donation received.

The proposal was agreed unanimously, with the additional costs to be met from the Church Repair Fund.

MM has received a quote of £1,600 to replace the stair carpet. The VAT cannot be reclaimed however. To have carpet made to fit the curved steps near the top would cost an extra £612. The carpet would match that in the Upper Room and there is the question of whether we should have nosings all the way down.

MM suggested that any decision was deferred until after the Quinquennial Inspection which might throw up other work to be done, and if were to make an Appeal it could include these. DG thought that we should wait until much nearer the end of the financial year, as we are committing to spending a lot of money and we would then have a clearer idea of available funds. He would propose taking the money from the General Fund rather than putting out an Appeal.

There was a short discussion about the use made of notice boards in various locations in the church and what we could do with the one dismantled to make way for the display units.

Fund raising/Outreach

KF reported back on the Committee which had met on 9th April. KF listed the various events which have been organised: Market Stall; Boot Fair (raised £1100 approx); Wind Orchestra concert (£187); 30th June Summer Variety Evening; in September a Poetry and Jazz evening; Harvest Supper; Men's Breakfast and Ladies Breakfast; Christmas Tree Festival and Hadlow Remembers which will be led by Rev'd Nicky. This will be a special event on 10th November to mark 100 years since the end of The Great War and to remember with 88 poppies the parishioners who died in the war.

With regard to the Market Stall run by the Scouts, the Committee propose that the whole amount raised of £94 be given to the Scouts. THIS WAS APPROVED by the PCC.

World mission

BS reported that the June market stall would be in aid of the Childrens' Society. JM had organised our participation in April's Unlock Walk and we raised £1,700 approx. for the organisation. Regarding the church contribution to Away Giving, people are immensely generous when a specific request is made. In total, £6,000 has been given away although not all from church funds. The money raised from the Village Community at Carols in the Square (£966) was split between the Food Bank in Paddock Wood and Crisis at Christmas.

8. **Safeguarding – new guidelines from Archdeacon Julie**

Rev'd Paul informed the meeting that in his opinion the important change is that we only need to appoint one Parish Safeguarding Officer, rather than separate ones. The role of the Safeguarding Officer is set out in the new Guidelines and BS indicated that she would be happy to continue in this role.

The meeting voted unanimously that BS be appointed Parish Safeguarding Officer.

BS explained that as soon as DBS checks for PCC members were complete, the next stage would be to start training. BS requested that if possible people look at C0 Training in advance of the next meeting. The session takes about 1 hour and only requires listening to. The email receipt of the Certificate should be forwarded to BS and she will log it.

KP will ask all the Education Committee to do it and BS confirmed that the training extends to cover other areas in the church e.g. servers, greeters, not just the PCC. She requested that this be an Agenda Item at the next full PCC meeting.

Regarding the Formal Safeguarding Statement, the PCC HEREBY RESOLVES TO ADOPT the House of Bishops' *"Promoting a Safe Church; safeguarding policy statement"*.

A formal statement of adoption, signed on behalf of the PCC, will be displayed in the Porch.

9. **PCC financial liability and compliance with 'Fit and Proper Persons' legislation**

JG confirmed that forms had been completed last year by existing PCC members and only new PCC members needed to sign forms. These should be returned to JG who keeps them within the PCC members' files.

10. **APCM feedback**

Rev'd Paul commented that the format seems to work and JG requested PCC members to look through the APCM Minutes and notify her of any errors while the meeting is still fresh in our minds, so that they can be dealt with.

11. **Mission Action Plan**

Rev'd Paul reported that we are not able to start our Action Plan at the moment as the Diocesan tool kit was not yet available but it's purpose was to map out what the church currently does in mission and outreach and any additional actions we could take. He felt that an important part of our Action Plan should address the demographic challenge facing the church, and suggested that our Plan should include holding Alpha/Emmaus courses to which the community in Hadlow could be invited. Alpha is a well-known brand which people would recognise and is not an expensive course to run. The decision is when to start, possibly September but it is a very busy time. He asked the PCC to give some thought as to a suitable start date. Rev'd Paul suggested that in order to avoid the first course being overwhelmed with church members, which could be intimidating for those from outside the church, it might be an idea for the first course to be for church members only and then have others for the community.

KP commented she felt it was a good idea because the church has concentrated on young people and has not reached out to adults.

12. **Data protection**

Rev'd Paul advised the meeting that Janice Massy is notifying Convenors of groups requesting details of any personal data they hold and where it is kept. The church does already hold personal data, but new consents would be required to allow us to use personal data on the website. When details have been received from Convenors, they will be entered on to a detailed spreadsheet, which will include confirmation that it is held securely and not freely available.

IT WAS AGREED that email details of PCC members are permitted to be circulated within the PCC.

13. **Correspondence**

JG reported that she sent a letter to Geoff Marsh thanking him for the work he had done.

14. **Any other important business**

In response to a query regarding PCC Minutes on the church website, JG clarified that the Minutes are approved by email and then put on the website, although not officially signed. After discussion regarding the length of time the Minutes should remain on the website, IT WAS AGREED by the majority of the PCC that only the latest Minutes should appear on the website.

PCC Secretary - it was noted that JG had resigned as Secretary and that the PCC is required to appoint a Secretary.

Rev'd Paul asked everyone to prayerfully consider whether they would be willing to take on the role as outlined by JG, or if they could suggest someone who might be willing to take it on.

Rev'd Paul thanked JG for stepping in as temporary PCC Secretary and for continuing as Diocesan contact until a new Secretary is appointed. For any further information regarding the role, please contact JG.

Update for Holiday at Home 20th/21st August - JH and Rev'd Nicky have met to set out more detailed plans for the project. It is hoped that 15 - 20 people will attend and personal invites will be made by JH and Rev'd Nicky.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Monday 18 June Standing Committee at the Vicarage

Monday 16 July Full PCC

The meeting closed with the second part of Compline.