

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, HADLOW

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on Monday 18th January 2021

8pm via Zoom

1. Opening prayer

Rev'd Paul welcomed everyone, and the meeting began with a prayer

2. Members present

Rev'd Paul White (PW, Chair); Cathy Brill (CB); (NC); Richard Hopkinson (RH); Melissa Crawshay-Williams (MW); Jenny Hopkins (JH); Lee Kirk (LK); Julia Miles (JM); Janice Massy (JCM); Martin Massy (MM); Steve Newell (SN); Val Newell (VN); Lisa Porritt (LP); Michael Payne (MP); John Speed (JS) and Kirsty Finch (KF)

Apologies for absence: Katerina Plucknett-Nixon (KN)

3. Approval of the Minutes of:

The minutes of the meeting of the PCC held on 16th November and the Standing Committee held on 30th November were approved unanimously.

4. Matters Arising (not otherwise covered by the Agenda)

PCC Membership forms: Could new members please return membership / trustee forms ASAP.

MM will try to send resolutions for members to vote as a separate document.

Laptop: JS advised that the laptop for the parish administrator is now ready to go. Just needs to install Microsoft Word.

5. National Lockdown

a. Church closure to in-person worship

PW stated that our closure to in person worship was inline with many other churches throughout the country and that the decision will be reviewed 4 weeks from the date of the resolution (Tuesday 5th January). This is therefore due to be reviewed on Tuesday 2nd February.

The Standing Committee will review the resolution.

The Government is due to review the current national lockdown on 15th February.

RH disagrees with the decision to close the church to in-person worship and would like to see the church open even if no one is there. RH outlined his views in an email dated 5th January 2021.

MP said that RH makes a valid point and asked if there could be more general access to the church for maybe 2 days a week. At the moment it is only open Wednesday

mornings for families to collect from the food bank. Although in emergencies people can contact PW or Sharon Vanns at school.

PW replied that this could be reviewed in time but that at the moment access to the church needs to be limited following the 'spirit of the law', which requires all people to only leave home if it is essential.

b. Worship

Although there have been some technical difficulties (for example, with the audio), generally the online services are going well. This can be dependent on more broadly based Internet difficulties in the village as a whole.

Thanks to Francis and Michael for playing the organ and piano on a rota system.

It was suggested that 'Mute All' might be used on Zoom at the start and end of a service so that the music can be heard. The organ is easier to hear than the piano.

JM pointed out that it is important to show our appreciation of the music at the end of the service.

JCM wondered if a virtual coffee could be reintroduced for the congregation to chat after the service. It was agreed that this should start as soon as the service ends.

c. Live streaming equipment upgrade

JS informed us that he's been in contact with Old Barn Audio regarding the upgrading of our audio system (with the addition of a camera) so that both audio and camera can be linked to the Internet. The cost is around £3,000-£4,000.

Upgrading the system may be beneficial to allow for baptisms/weddings/funerals to be streamed for family and friends unable to attend. This may prove to be a good 'selling point'

YouTube and FaceBook are easier for broadcasting whereas linking to Zoom may be a little more difficult.

JS advised that the operation of a system such as this should be fairly straightforward as positions of the camera could be pre-programmed.

Allchurches Trust can provide grants (up to 80%) for projects such as this for up to £50,000.

The PCC agreed for JS to continue discussions with the audio company and other companies regarding quotes.

The PCC also agreed for PW to proceed with a grant application to see if a grant is possible before committing any monies.

d. Contact with church members

PW advised that there had been no takers for the tablets.

It was agreed that it would be best to use the phone to contact.

SN suggested putting a line in the monthly village newsletter asking people if they would like to be contacted.

MP stressed the importance of keeping in touch with the more vulnerable members of the congregation. Suggested writing or emailing all those on the Parish electoral roll asking if anyone would appreciate a 'friendly' phone call. PW is happy to do this.

CB reminded people to take care when giving out telephone numbers.

JH is training to become part of the Anna Chaplaincy and this will provide a great way of contacting the elderly within our community.

Best approach is to reach out more informally and create an informal network. PW will mention this at the next service.

e. Food Bank

PW advised that there is a steady stream of food coming in and going out on a regular basis.

7-8 families are being helped in Hadlow each week.

£2000 worth of donations has been received including £950 from the Tonbridge Rotary Club. Many thanks to them for such a generous donation.

Sharon Vanns also takes food for school families if they are in need.

PW has been approached by a student from Judd School asking if we need volunteers...not at the moment, although this may change if there is a greater demand (eg if unemployment rises as furlough schemes end)

The Food Bank is advertised on the Hadlow residents FaceBook page every Tuesday.

Always a good response.

PW advised that the food bank would continue after the pandemic. As long as there is demand.

6. Finance

a. Treasurer's Report

PCC looked at report circulated by MM.

MM advised that we are expecting a small surplus this financial year.

We are still currently paying our Parish Offer of £3,600pm (£43,200pa)

Although we have had a loss of income this has been helped by a decrease in costs this year (largely due to our organist retiring)

Regular giving is approx. £3,800pm largely from Standing Orders and some envelopes.

We have total assets of approximately £32,000. This is made up of Restricted and Unrestricted funds.

Restricted includes things such as the Food Bank, Church repair, Kibakwe, Delhi Brotherhood.

At the end of 2019 roughly £11,000 was unrestricted.

MM advised that the Chancel Emergency Fund (£5-6,000) can only be used for major works not just painting.

MM agreed that it would be good to increase our unrestricted funds.

PCC could decide to move money from the Chancel Emergency Fund to unrestricted on request to the diocese.

The Diocese did offer us extra money during the pandemic but we declined.

SN thanked MM for his good presentation of the figures.

b. Stewardship/Raising money

JS suggested there could be a separate committee that meets once or twice a year.

RH would be very happy to contribute ideas.

PW we need to tread carefully when trying to raise funds, as these have been tricky times for many people.

MM suggested that upgrading our digital giving could be a good idea.

NC also suggested that there are also online giving opportunities with companies such as Amazon. Though possibly not ideal to use Amazon.

MM will organize a meeting of the Finance Committee to kick-start the scheme. This meeting will be open to all.

7. Sub- Committee Reports

a. Education

CB advised the committee that the Christingle bags were much appreciated, although not as many takers as hoped.

The next step will be to think about Easter bags.

Kelly Parsons will be leading the Lent Course this year.

b. Fabric

MM advised that a meeting has yet to be arranged.

PW suggested that areas of the church would benefit from some painting especially around the Chancel. KF and CF are happy to take a look at what needs doing and volunteer some time to do it. Careful consideration of materials /paint to be used is important.

c. Outreach and Fundraising

KF advised that a meeting took place last week .

Advent windows were a great success. Thanks to JCM for her organising.

Thanks to Vanessa for her Zoom talks. More to follow.

PW suggested a speaker from Ahmadi Islam would be a great addition too.

Zoom Quiz on Saturday 30th January at 7.30pm

Zoom Scattergories Quiz on Saturday 27th February.

Future events will hopefully include a concert by Francis Griffiths and Rebecca Hooper (possibly October), a Boot Fair (possibly August Bank Holiday). Scarecrow Trail (September). Christmas Tree Festival (December)

d. World Mission

JM spoke on behalf of the sub-committee, as there is no convenor at the moment following Barbara's move. She explained the role of the committee.

2 PCC committee members on the WMC at the moment: JM and KF.

PW suggested possibly there is no role for a World Mission Committee at the moment as there are no funds to give away? Maybe as a PCC we can think about how to support eg Delhi Brotherhood/Kibakwe every 6 months or so. The Committee has been active raising money for local charities and raising the profile of Kibakwe/Delhi Brotherhood. This year's Lent Church Appeal will need to be online. After much discussion, the PCC agreed to support the Delhi Brotherhood this year for the Lent Appeal.

BACS transfer for donations via St.Mary's bank account will work but would need to be referenced specifically for the Delhi Brotherhood.

PW will circulate details for people to make a donation if they choose to. MM will provide the bank details.

NC suggested that people could donate directly to the Delhi Brotherhood via their website. MM advised it would be better to donate via church.

8. Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

a. Date

Sunday 25th April is the provisional date.

b. Actions

Revision of the Electoral Roll is required.

Draft reports due by 22nd February from each sub-committee.

Annual reports and accounts then go to PCC for approval on 15th March.

NC and JM will be leaving at the end of their 3 year stint on PCC.

MM advised that numbers leaving the PCC varies greatly every year. May need to introduce a different system at some point.

PW suggested that we keep things as they are this year ie 2 members off and 2 members join. This was agreed.

9. Safeguarding

CB and PW reported that there are no issues at present.

CB has enrolled on a safeguarding course that is due to start in March.

May need to start renewing our courses at church in due course.

JH has enhanced disclosure, required for her Anna Chaplaincy work.

10. Correspondence

None to report

11. A.O.B

JH advised committee of World Day of Prayer due to take place on Friday 5th March. JH will keep us posted regarding any decisions made.

12. Confidentiality

No issues of confidentiality

13. Dates of next PCC meetings

Standing Committee: Monday 15th February

Full PCC Monday 15th March

The meeting closed with a prayer.

Signature.....

Date.....