

ST.PETER'S PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, 22<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY 2020 at 7.30 pm

Present: The Rev. Greg Bartlem (Chairman), Mrs Sheila Parry (Secretary), Mrs Christine Shehata (Church Warden), Mrs Jann Wallace (Treasurer), Mr Richard Bacon, the Rev. Wendy Biddington, Mr David Close, the Rev. Barry Coleman, Mr Graham Day, Mr Richard Flower, Mrs Margaret Howard, Ms Pat Mills, Mrs Linda Mitchell, Mrs Chris Murphy, and Mrs Veronica Quinn.

In attendance: the Rev. William Howard acting as minutes clerk

Apologies: Cyril Loman, Tony Norton, Jackson Towers and Fiona Unsworth

GB welcomed everyone to the first PCC of the year, and DC led an Opening prayer.

RF agreed to open the next meeting in prayer.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: none declared

20.1 MINUTES: The Minutes of the meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 were approved.

#### MATTERS ARISING

20.2 Eco church: GB was hoping that the lady who spearheads Ecochurch at Alveston which has Bronze membership could come and tell us more. Unable to come to this PCC, hopefully she can come to the next one.

20.3 Safeguarding Policy: It emerged that the policy had only just appeared on the website and several members of PCC had not seen it in time to put their names to it, so it was agreed that all church officers should sign the sheet to say that they had read and will follow the new policy. All but two PCC members had undergone the basic training, and WB agreed to lay on a training session soon after the APCM so that any new members could do it. [now arranged for May 13<sup>th</sup>]

20.4 Church Toilet: This has been redecorated, and several people have commented favourably about it, but the new pan is still awaited.

20.5 Junior St.James Singers: They have apparently found a new place to rehearse, so no longer use St.Peter's. It was a pity they hadn't let us know, as the heat has been put on for them unnecessarily for several weeks.

#### VICAR'S REPORT

20.6 Review of Christmas services: GB reported on the Christmas services. It was felt that people like to 'have a good sing' at a Carol Service and it was good to limit the number of items performed by St.Peter's Singers. Fewer people came to the Christingle Service, which was a bit late in the day, and duplicated several others in the village. Maybe it could be held after Christmas. Three people who came to the Crib Service have started coming to Alpha. GB thanked all who had taken part in various ways.

20.7 Connections: People at Connections don't always hear about things – though they may be on the notice sheet.

20.8 New Churchwarden(s): GB emphasised that we really need a churchwarden or two. He thanked CS for her sterling service over five years. CS gave a summary of what she does, either *ex officio* or by choice. There was some discussion as to whether people would more readily offer to serve if the job was slimmed down, or divided up. Some things can be taken on by an assistant church warden but there are certain things only a duly elected churchwarden can do, as Bishop's Officer. Further definition is needed before people can be challenged to consider taking it on. Current PCC members are the most likely candidates.

20.9 Tony Norton: Tony has been off since the beginning of December, but should be resuming on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

20.10 Work with Young People: GB and Simon Ree have been working with older youth, who gather in places like the underpass. PC Chairman Anne Prior has suggested a new Charity which the PC could contribute finance to, in conjunction with the Church, for helping youth work happen more often than GB can afford to give it, and perhaps purchase a Bus or build a skate park.

20.11 Confidential Emails: PCC members need to be aware that emails to or between them may be confidential, and they really need an email address which is not shared with non-member family members, or even a separate computer.

20.12 PCC Away Day Church Development Report: The strategy group had considered various priorities from issues raised at the PCC Open day...

20.13 Normalising discussion of everyday faith: The MST could suggest topics, but people were wary of over-intensifying the chat after worship with perhaps new people. But the topics could be taken up in home-groups.

20.14 Review of existing structures: There may be too many sub-committees, and a team (or 'sub-committee') could look into this. Looking to the future, there may not be as many people who have time to serve in complicated systems of church management, so it should be simplified. GD and DC offered, and suggested FU, and GB said Matt Jermyn from the Diocesan might be very helpful.

20.15 Fostering Church unity: Suggestions were made of a summer teaching series on different kinds of spirituality, encouraging people to occasionally try a different Sunday Service, and having Church Picnics during the Summer holiday period. WB suggested Renovaré resources.

20.16 Developing work with younger people: Ideas including creating 'social spaces' for younger families who are part of Café Connections, Little Angels, Messy Church and the Sunday children group. A group of families are exploring going to a Children's Summer Camp together in order to both encourage the children's faith journey's and to build community between church families. It was suggested that it might be near enough to be the location of a Sunday service that other members of the congregation could come and join in with.

20.17 Developing the next generation of leaders: Simpler Church structures would be welcomed by this generation.

20.17 Saturday tea/coffee afternoons: *[this Agenda item was omitted. The first one was advertised and offered on Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> but no-one came. MH and others who helped propose to try again in the Spring]*

20.19 Electoral roll: *[this Agenda item was omitted. Any new applications need to be accepted at the March PCC meeting]*

## FABRIC

20.20 Health & Safety: CL is doing a Health and Safety Review of the church.

20.21 Boundary wall repair: This is being deferred for the time being. The owners of The King's Head have agreed to pay towards it.

20.22 Aylworth tomb: DC will investigate getting a Conservation report done, for which a grant may be available, before permissions can be obtained to restore or flatten the Grade 2 listed tomb.

20.23 North aisle projector and screen: a sturdier step ladder has been obtained and training can now be offered for using the new system: only SH and CL currently know how to set it up.

## FINANCE

20.24 Cash: Paying Bank account cash in at the Post Office seems to be working but coins have to be made up into full bags.

20.25 Finance report: The Report could not be adopted because neither the final quarter of 2019 finance report nor the 2020 budget had been seen by every PCC member, so it was agreed that everyone should ensure that they had seen them, then *email JW or DC by February 3rd* indicating either their basic acceptance of it or their need to discuss problems at an extra-ordinary PCC meeting, because the mid-March PCC meeting will be rather late to agree the year's budget. Income was slightly higher than had been budgeted for. Expenditure was slightly under, but this was mainly because a late payment to Youth Services came after the year-end (which will inflate the 2020 expenditure). The 2019 deficit will be smaller than expected.

20.26 Organist: JT has offered to continue as organist for another year, and this was agreed by PCC members.

20.27 Inflationary Uplift: it was agreed to increase all staff wages in line with 1½% inflation this year from January 1st.

20.28 Independent Examiner: we weren't able to elect an Independent Examiner at last year's APCM so it becomes a PCC responsibility to appoint someone. JW has found that Mr Malcolm Edge, who has experience of church and charity finances and is willing to take it on. JW abstaining, this was agreed unanimously.

20.29 Parish Giving Gift Aid Scheme: JW said that the scheme, already accepted by the PCC, had been trialed by members of the finance committee. She will explain the scheme at each Service on Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>. Giftaid gets automatically claimed each month for all taxpayers who are giving regularly through the scheme. It is hoped that as many people as possible will review their giving and set a generous amount for their monthly gift, and will tick the box to indicate acceptance of an inflation uplift each year. There need to be cards for people to 'put in the collection' and the prayer of offering should include those unseen gifts and well as 'these gifts'.

20.30 Donation Card Reader: A card-reader has been tried out at Connections, but so far only SH knows how to set it up. People can use it to give donations using a contactless debit or credit card with a choice of set amounts or to specify an amount. This came free, but it was agreed we purchase another, for use in church, and for more people to be trained to set it up.

20.31 Expenses: It was clarified that while volunteers can deduct expenses (such as food items) before handing in takings from an event, they need to fill in a standard form detailing it for the Treasurer, and staff members must hand in the full amounts and claim costs on their normal expenses claim.

20.32 Loxley Concerts: GB referred members to a letter he had received from Duncan Watts who has been organising concerts at Loxley for 5 years, on Sunday afternoons from May to October, usually on the third Sunday of the month, from 3-4pm, featuring young musicians who perform free of charge, with time to rehearse in the church beforehand from 1pm, and with free admission. The retiring collections (for church fabric) have raised about £2,500 (plus some Giftaid) each year. He has booked performers for most of the year ahead, but would like to hand over to someone else, for the concerts to take place at another church, and has offered the scheme to Walton or Wellesbourne. He is willing to help as he hands the job over. MH said that she and William and the Sampsons have been to some of these Loxley concerts, and she felt that Walton was more suitable as a venue than the much larger and darker interior of St .Peter's. BC pointed out that we often have baptisms on summer Sundays and Wellesbourne church would not always be available at 1pm. It was agreed that a small group meet to consider this, including GB, CS, CM, Duncan Watts and William Howard who has indicated a willingness to take it on.

20.33 Events and Fundraising: Social events and fundraising more widely was discussed, emphasising that churches do not want to appear to be intent on people's money, but that events can be good ways of getting to know people and drawing them in, and giving them an opportunity to be generous if they want to be.

There was a pause for Prayer, led by GD.

20.34 Safeguarding policy – GB explained that filling in the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard had revealed a few gaps and some items to work on. We don't have a Policy for Ex-Offenders, but hopefully we can get a model one from the Diocese. We need to check that all church activities and groups are included and up-to-date in the checklist, and that risk assessments are current. All new leaders need to have read the policy and signed acceptance of it, and everyone needs to know how to respond to a concern or allegation, and not just ignore things. Our safeguarding officer LM said she didn't seem to have received any emails on safeguarding recently.

## TOPICS

20.35 Graves: GB asked that PCC members support and uphold the sensitive and difficult work of the clergy who need to gently but firmly persuade people to keep to the rules of the churchyard, including not putting objects on graves, which are not allowed, and can easily be damaged when the churchyard is being mowed, which itself causes further distress to grieving families, and may dissuade the gardening contractors from doing their job. One family had covered a grave with astro-turf, and another family had copied them. Churchyard rules are national, and while local clergy check that applications adhere to the rules, only the Diocesan Registrar can allow exceptional memorials. MH led the PCC in prayer for this sensitive ministry.

20.36 Mission Support & Partners: Our policy in recent years has been to support three mission partner organisations, reviewing them in turn on a three year cycle, balancing local and international work. At present we are supporting the Gibsons with CMS in Lebanon, Christians Against Poverty, and (due for review this year) Amasango School, Grahamstown. The case for reviewing them all annually was put to the vote and rejected by 11 votes to 6. A suggestion was considered to replace Amasango with our Community Fund, but the feeling was that it's already part of our church, not a partner, but that it needs more publicity to attract more interest and support than at present, perhaps

with a carboy occasionally or something which better attracts Giftaid. It was agreed to ask the wider congregation if there are potential mission partners that they wish to nominate alongside Amasango which is up for renewal.

20.37 Correspondence: A Thank you letter was received from Amasango Career School.

AOB

20.38 Genexis: BC explained that Genexis had run a series of meetings in Coventry with high-powered speakers from the scientific world, and scholars including Bishop Tom Wright, making the case for Christian faith. BC is on a panel which has been developing a study course based on this material, which he is planning to pilot in the coming months, and he invited the PCC to enrol St. Peter's as a Sponsor, which does not commit us to financial support. This was agreed.

20.39 Lent Materials: GB commended Lenten materials: 'Living Justly', for home-groups, and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 'Saying Yes to Life' for personal study, which would also be used for teaching at Wednesday 7pm services during Lent.

The Meeting ended at 10.35pm.

The Next Meeting is on Wednesday March 18<sup>th</sup>.