

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, CHILTON

Minutes of the Annual Meetings held on

Thursday 8 October 2020 at 7.30pm

Via Zoom video conference and in All Saints' Church

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Annual Meetings were held later in the year than normal and were conducted electronically via Zoom video conferencing.

The meetings were attended by 14 people, 4 of whom were in the Church building, and 10 people joined via Zoom. One of the attendees in Church was present from item 8 of the APCM onwards.

The Chairman, Rev Dr Jonathan Mobey, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

He informed the meeting that we intended to take a screenshot of the Zoom participants during the meeting so that we can potentially use this in publicity for our churches. No concerns were raised. Jonathan thanked Allan Macarthur, Churchwarden of St Matthew's Harwell, for arranging the technical set up for the meetings.

Jonathan opened the meeting in prayer.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Judy Goodall, Liz Morris and Christopher Pollard.

Annual Parochial Meeting

2. Election of Churchwardens

Jonathan thanked Alex Reich and Yvonne Sanderson for serving as Churchwardens for the past year. Alex had served more than 6 consecutive years and was due to stand down. Yvonne was willing to stand again for election and Judith Russell had agreed to stand to replace Alex.

Jonathan said that **Yvonne Sanderson** had been nominated by Alex Reich and seconded by Liz Morris and **Judith Russell** had been nominated by Hazel Benton and seconded by Audrey Slater to serve as Churchwardens for the next year. There were no other nominations and they were elected unanimously.

Signed as a true record

Chairman

Secretary

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the meetings held on 17 March 2019 were accepted as a true record, proposed by Jonathan and seconded by Andrew Hayes, and they were signed.

2. Resolution re new rule on number of terms served on the Deanery Synod

Jonathan explained that a new rule had been passed by the General Synod which limited the number of terms that elected lay members of the Deanery Synod may serve. This had been bundled up with some other matters when voted on by the General Synod and this particular aspect of the new rules had had unintentional consequences. It had not been expedient to amend this particular ruling without jeopardising the whole bundle so it was passed by the General Synod. Apparently, the intention is for the General Synod to change it back again in due course. Jonathan clarified that, therefore, our resolution to dis-apply this new rule would maintain the status quo in the meantime.

Jonathan proposed that the new limit be disapplied. There was one vote against the proposal, one abstention and 12 in favour.

3. Election of Deanery Synod representatives

Chilton was permitted to elect two representatives to the Deanery Synod. No nominations had been received so both posts lie vacant.

4. Election of PCC Members

Jonathan had circulated the details of PCC membership and vacancies in an e-mail before the meeting. He explained that there were 5 vacancies (4 for 3 years and 1 for 2 years).

The following nominations had been received for 3 year appointments:

Stuart Gibson (nominated by Hazel Benton, seconded by Liz Morris)

John Pigott (nominated by Yvonne Sanderson, seconded by Alex Reich)

Alex Reich (nominated by Liz Morris, seconded by Hazel Benton)

All were elected unanimously. There were therefore 2 vacancies remaining, one for 3 years and one for 2 years.

Mrs Benton asked for the PCC membership to be amended to reflect that Rev Jan Radford is now 'Assistant Minister' rather than 'Assistant Curate', and this was accepted.

5. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Jonathan explained that the financial accounts are effectively audited by someone who we appoint to be the Independent Examiner. Once again, Jane Moreton has agreed to fulfil this role for the 2020 financial accounts. Jonathan proposed that Jane Moreton be appointed again as Independent Examiner, and this was approved unanimously.

6. Receipt of the Reports

The following reports had been made available in the weeks leading up to the meeting and were formally 'received' by the meeting:

Minutes of the Annual Meetings held in March 2019

The PCC Annual Report for 2019, including the Electoral Roll Report

Fabric Report for 2019

Financial Report and Accounts for 2019, approved by the PCC at its February 2020 meeting

Deanery Synod Report on 2019 proceedings

All the reports were available on the Church website but if anyone had difficulty accessing them they should contact Jonathan or Deborah Evans, Church Administrator (maternity cover).

7. Electoral Roll Report

Jonathan explained that the Electoral Roll is a list of those entitled to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meetings and is also one indicator to the Diocese of church membership (average Sunday attendance in October being the other). The number on the Electoral Roll is also a factor which feeds into calculation of Parish Share payments. Carol Pigott is our Electoral Roll Officer and Jonathan thanked her for managing the Roll which showed that, following its revision in March 2020, there were 68 people on the Roll compared with 70 in 2019 (10 of whom were not Chilton residents), 3 people had been removed (2 having died and 1 having moved abroad), and 1 person had been added.

8. Thanks

Jonathan said it was always impossible to list everyone who should be thanked but he did want to acknowledge the work of the following people specifically:

The Churchwardens and PCC Members;

Andrew Hayes for chairing the Fabric Committee, Judith Russell for co-ordinating the care of the churchyard and all who helped with the care of the Church building and churchyard;

Stuart Gibson for managing the finances;

Rev Pam Rolls as Associate Minister and all in the Ministry Team.

Jonathan re-iterated his general thanks to all those who serve in all sorts of ways.

9. Implementation of the Church Vision: “Growing God’s Church, wider, deeper and closer”

Jonathan read from Romans 12 v.1-13.

He pointed out that this passage has much to say to us at an Annual Meeting and at this time in our national life.

Jonathan said that at this time we are unable to worship in the normal way. However, our worship is more than gathering together on a Sunday. Rather, we worship with our whole lives and minds.

Jonathan remarked that each of us has unique opportunities, situations and gifts. He went on to say:

“I want to use this occasion to thank you for your partnership in the work of both All Saints’ Chilton and St Matthew’s Harwell, with whom we form a united benefice. We are a Christian community at the heart of our village communities, seeking to serve our neighbours in love, share with them the good news of Jesus, and help one another to deepen our lived-out faith. We are about growing God’s Church, wider, deeper and closer.

We do this through teams of people who run our worship services, in-person and now also on-line, small groups such as home groups and the Alpha Course, our baby and toddler groups, baptisms, weddings and funerals, Generation Gold and Evergreens, children’s, youth and women’s groups, Holiday Club, pastoral work, supporting our local Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Debt Centre and a number of mission partners further afield, and more! Enabling and underpinning much of this activity are our Church buildings and St Matthew’s Church Hall in Harwell (lovingly cared for, maintained, cleaned and decorated), our leadership and governance teams, and the generous financial giving of many.

We are one body, with one mission, but many parts, each able uniquely to give our time, talents, and “treasure” to enable the work of our churches; to do so is an act of spiritual worship that glorifies God (ref. Romans 12).

At our annual meetings it is good to review what God has been doing amongst us, and where he is leading us. Our annual reports focus on 2019, but we reflect also on the last six months, with its considerable challenges, but also opportunities. I want to highlight two aspects of our corporate life – and the challenges and opportunities of this season.

The first is connection, the second is stewardship.

Connection

A particular challenge during these last six months and going forward is to remain connected to one another, and maybe also remain connected to God. Initially services in Church and most other in-person activities had to stop, and we moved online in many areas. We are now starting to do a bit more in person, such as our evening services alternating between Chilton and Harwell, and now experimenting with socially-distanced gatherings for families on Sunday mornings at St Matthew’s.

Many home groups have continued to meet in various ways, but some have been unable to, and many individuals are not in such groups. As a result for the next few months we will be starting a number of Zoom-based Connect groups which will give us a new opportunity to connect both with one another and with God; more news on those to follow.

Stewardship

Another challenge in the last few months has been our finances. But this also presents an opportunity for each of our financial priorities and our giving to the Churches.

Many individuals and families in our Church and community are finding themselves in financial difficulty at this time. Our Churches are here to support them in various ways, including through the provision of our CAP Debt Centre. Others will not be struggling in the same way and may even have made savings over the last few months.

Our Churches are facing a particular challenge this year to balance the books and ensure that we are able to continue to do all that we wish to do, and even do exciting new things, but we know that God is able to provide for all our needs. God's plentiful resources are there, some of them within our own bank accounts!

As we celebrate God's generosity to us in the season of harvest, it is appropriate to focus on stewardship – on making wise, generous use of all that we have been given. The last Sunday in October, 25th, is going to be our Gift Day, an opportunity for us to individually respond to God's goodness to us, and to support the ongoing work of our Churches.

There will be two main ways that you can respond. The first is with a one-off gift. The second is to pledge to give on a regular basis, e.g. monthly, perhaps for a set time. There will also be the opportunity for your gift to be used in one of four ways:

1. General giving, to support the whole work of our Churches, and used in the way most needed.
2. To enable us to continue to employ our Children and Families' Workers beyond the end of the year; this has the exciting opportunity of securing match-funding through a Greater Didcot Christians Youth work Trust that we are hoping to establish in January with three local partner Churches.
3. To support the work in our communities of our local CAP Debt Centre, which has to date enabled 42 individuals and families to become debt free; this is a critical service that will sadly be even more needed in the coming months as the economic effects of Covid-19 play out
4. To maintain and develop our beautiful Church buildings which are a wonderful resource, and a spiritual and operational base. In the case of St Matthew's we need to cover the cost of essential roof work following the recent lead theft, and in the case of All Saints' to cover some outstanding costs associated with the new access path installed a few years ago.

If you are a tax payer, the value of your gift is increased by 25% through the Gift Aid scheme, but as with the five small loaves and two fishes, whatever our tax status, be assured that all that we give back to God is hugely multiplied by the Giver of all good things (ref James 1).

As we sing at Harvest time: “All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, so thank the Lord... for all his love”.

10. Discussion and questions

A number of people present made comments and asked questions as follows:

- a. Andrew and Audrey Hayes said how much they appreciated the online services with contributions from many church members. The part that Deborah Evans and Allan Macarthur played in assembling these services was also acknowledged.
- b. Andrew asked whether now would be a good time to look at unlocking the some of the investment in the Carterton House Fund which is a Restricted Fund. Stuart answered that there were issues around the wishes of the original donors, and he and Audrey Slater both said that this action needs a lot of thought as taking money from investments can be ‘the thin end of the wedge’.
- c. Andrew asked if he could receive feedback on fabric matters from the PCC at an earlier stage. It would be helpful if he could hear about discussion and decision on fabric matters within about a week of PCC meetings. Jonathan apologised that Andrew felt out of the loop and it was agreed that he should be kept informed in a more timely way.
- d. At present the PCC was without a Secretary as Christopher Pollard had had to relinquish the role temporarily as he was undertaking a Masters Course in Oxford. Jonathan requested prayer for the appointment of another Secretary.
- e. Alex and Yvonne had the Terrier and Inventory with them and anyone wanting to see them could do so. Andrew commented that the responsibility for the boundary wall between the churchyard and the Old Rectory were still not resolved and, when ownership was established, this should be reflected in an update to the Terrier.
- f. Several people present were disappointed that there were no younger Church members present at the Annual Meetings. Jonathan thought that evenings might be difficult for young families who are putting children to bed. Yvonne commented that more young members would normally be present when our meetings follow on from morning services as they would already be in church.
- g. Alex proposed a vote of thanks to everyone for their support of him and his fellow Churchwarden, Yvonne. He felt that we were blessed with good helpers and volunteers and it was great to be part of a congregation which supported the Church’s ministry over many years, especially behind the scenes. He also thanked the Clergy; Pam and Jan for giving time to Church and community and to Jonathan for planning and vision. He felt there were

exciting opportunities ahead of us. He hoped that 'growing wider' would include a socially and liberally progressive movement – a wide place in all respects.

11. Closing Prayer

There being no further business the meeting closed with prayer at 8.40pm.

Pam Rolls

Acting Secretary

Signed as a true record

Chairman

Secretary