

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Held on Wednesday 24th April 2019
Following the Annual Meeting of Parishioners in Church

The Vicar, the Reverend John Hookway presided.

There were 60 members present and apologies for absence were received from 27 members.

Minutes of the previous Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th April 2018 were read, corrected, confirmed and signed. There were no matters arising.

Presentation of the Electoral Roll

Peter Wall presented the Electoral Roll and explained that the electoral roll has to be rewritten every 6 years and 2019 is one of those years. This always has the result that there are fewer names The Electoral Roll contains 199 names, of which 69 are resident within the parish and 130 are resident outside the parish. 11 are members of Emmanuel Shared Church.

Election of Members to the Deanery Synod

There being no nominations and it not being an election year, the representatives on the Deanery Synod remain as:

- Diana Perkins
- Peter Dane
- Catriona Baker

There is still one more space if anyone wishes to join them, but no nominations received. Thanks were expressed for all that they do in what can be a difficult role.

Election of members to the Parochial Church Council

There are 5 vacancies, 3 for a 3 year term, 2 for a 1 year term. We have received four nominations as follows:

Joanne Beer- 3 years	Proposed by Andy Beer	Seconded by Martin Dudley
Chris Woodrow- 1 year	Proposed by Claire Hallett	Seconded by Martin Rich
Louise Brett- 3 years	Proposed by Susan Barker	Seconded by David Briggs

Paul Davies – 3
years

Proposed by Martin
Dudley

Seconded by Ann Dawson

The above were duly elected to serve on the PCC. Josh Davies is proposed for co-option at the first PCC at the May meeting.

The PCC was prayed for individually and collectively.

Election of Assistant Church Wardens, Sides Persons and Welcome Team

Cheryl spoke on behalf of the Wardens to express thanks to the Assistant Wardens, Sides Persons and Welcome Team for their service over the past year, with special thanks to John and Betty Harrington and Andrew Wang who are standing down this year. She also thanked June Jarvest, Margaret and Neil Pearce for leading the welcome team. Cheryl then presented the list of those standing for the coming year. They are:

Assistant Wardens:

Stuart Baker, John Borgars, Stef Campbell, Richard Clayden, Katy Cole, Bruce Crowther Martin Dudley, Keith Fairey, Dave Illott, Hayley Murdoch, Bob Owen, Rob Swaile, Judith Swindell, Roger Tiffen, Jan Young.

Those present were all in favour and the above were duly appointed.

Sides Persons:

Don Adams, Kathryn Adams, Jessie Blair, Margaret Curd, Jenny Dixon Pat and Keith Fairey, Ann Herron, Eva Illott, Joan Murdoch, Diana Perkins, Roland Swaile, Leslie Wylds, Rob and Ruth Boulton, Richard and Heather Clayden, Jane Dudley, Barry and Chris Hozier, Cynthia Kattau, Alison Richards, Leslie Scott, Jenny and Peter Stratfold, Caroline Tiffen, Dave and Pam Willis

Those present were all in favour and the above were duly appointed.

Welcome Team:

Kathryn Adams, Elsie Edwards, Eva Illott, Ann Owen, Wendy and Mike Tucker, Pauline and Tony Vivers, Lynda Walsh, Ann Dawson, Gill du Boulay, Jan Elliott, June Jarvest, Cynthia Kattau, Deborah Mercer, Neil and Margaret Pearce, Ron Porter, Sara Rowe, Phil Scott, Brett Sutherland.

Those present were all in favour and the above were duly appointed.

The Vicar expressed his thanks to those who had served and continue to serve the church through roles of welcome, sides-persons and assistant warden and expressed his thoughts that we are very blessed as a church to have so many people prepared to serve.

Secretary's and Treasurer's reports

John explained that the annual report has been separated into two parts as we are now in a different size category according to the Charity Commission guidelines.

Sam Rich gave a short presentation on the finances of Christchurch. Key points which she addressed were:

- At the last APCM, Sam had stated that 2017 was the largest income in the church's history. She reported that income this year had exceeded that from 2017. Sam expressed thanks to those who had donated.
- Money is often seen as a dirty word. However, Jesus said that this was not the case and that as Christians, we should steward with integrity. She asked for prayer for the PCC to be good stewards of our Church's resources and to listen to what God wants us to do. If we do this, it allows us to invest in the kingdom both locally and further afield.
- In setting the budget for 2018, there was a funding gap of £16,500. The PCC set this budget as a faith budget, believing that God would provide. Once again, God has proved faithful and not only has income covered the faith budget, but it has also allowed the church to replenish its reserves to a level which is safer (around 3 month's worth of expenditure is held).
- The 2019 budget has also been set in faith with a funding gap of £21,500. However, it was pointed out that this year is atypical with regard to the changes as a result of the building project and we are not entirely sure of the changes this will made to expenditure.
- It is a challenge to make sure that the ongoing ministry fund costs are covered but Sam is excited to see where God is taking the church at this time.
- The most pressing financial issue at the moment is whether we should take a mortgage to cover the cashflow issue with regard to the building work. We have an agreement in principle at the moment which has not cost us anything to arrange. However, if we progress this any further, legal and other fees will be incurred. The PCC will need to make a decision on this in coming months. Sam asked for prayers for more interest free loans as this would save us a lot of money if compared with taking a mortgage.

Sam asked for her thanks to those who support her in her role as treasurer to be recorded. These people are: Ann Owen, bookkeeper: Wendy Tucker, Payroll; Ann and Martin doing payments: Bob Owen, counting money every week, and to the finance Committee, Paul Davies, Martin Dudley, Claire Hallett, Bob Barker and Sam Rich.

Sam invited questions and as there were no questions, she proposed acceptance of the accounts with a minor amendment to be made to accounts re a date.

Sam Rich proposed, Paul Davies Seconded. Accounts accepted.

Appointment of Independent Examiners

Stewardship have examined the accounts, and if we grow too much we will need full audit, which is nice problem to have. In the absence of full audit, Stewardship have examined the accounts. Sam proposed that we continue with Stewardship as our independent examiners again this year. This was seconded by Dave Illot. All present were in favour.

The Vicar expressed his thanks to Sam for her continued work as the treasurer for the Church and for the generosity of all. The meeting paused for prayer for those on the finance committee.

Remarks by the Vicar

John read out the statement from p9 of the annual report—re safeguarding and our statutory obligations and duties

“The PCC has a legal obligation under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops’ guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults) and it complied with this duty at its meeting on the 20th February 2017. Furthermore it intends to comply with this duty annually.

John asked that we note that PCC has always and will continue to have regard to this and that providing a safe, secure and transparent environment for all of ministries to grow and develop within is a priority for the PCC.

John then spent time reflecting on a scripture which is noted below.

1 Thes 5:16

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil.

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

Rejoice always. There will always be hard things but we are commanded to rejoice whatever may come. We have so many things to be thankful for. Read through the report of what has happened over the last year. John feels privileged to be able to join with people in their journey. We need to pray continually as a church and as part of this, we have added another

prayer meeting. When we hear His voice, we respond. By prayer, we can change not just the local area but the whole world. God has given so much. We sang the song "Amazing grace" because that is what He has given us. We give back to God not from our own resources but from what He has already given us. Be open to God, do not quench the spirit. RT Kendall says the spirit is often referred to as a dove which is small and can fly off unnoticed. Do not let this happen. We need to be open, continue to hear His words to us, test them and step out. He has been faithful for 160 years in this place. Looking back, His provision is amazing.

Sanctify you through and through = we are not there yet, God will change us as we allow Him to sanctify us so that we may be kept blameless for the coming of Lord. We want Him to say "Well done, good and faithful servant".

V24 is our verse for year. He calls us and we step out then HE does it. If we dare to step out, God will be faithful, we need to continue to pray and trust. John then asked everybody to turn to their neighbour and say how they have seen God's faithfulness over the last year. There was then a time of prayer.

John finished by reminding us how much change we have seen.

There then followed a time of expressing thanks to members of the congregation as follows:

- The Move out team for all their hard work. It is lovely to be a part of something which is so different which is refreshing but we are already looking forward to moving back in. The move out team have done such a good job that we have asked them to plan the move back.
- The Buildings committee have been working very hard behind the scenes. John expressed his thanks to them and in particular thanked Steve Elliot for steering this work.
- Thanks to the grants team for all the work they do in filling in applications.
- This week, we have been given another £100,000 so now only need to raise a further £287,000. Thanks to God for his amazing provision and goodness.
- Thanks to those who support the church growth through their work with the ministries such as CAP, LWLW, and so on.
- Thanks to Rev Caroline Keightly for all she has done in the parish and for overseeing the toddlers ministry. And congratulations to her on her appointment as vicar of Colney Heath.

Issues which need to be addressed in the next year not already covered.

We are aware of world beyond us and the need to be faithful in tithing from our resources. The tithe from phase 1 has been distributed. John asked for suggestions for any organisations which would benefit from phase 2 donations. Please send any suggestions via the PCC Secretary.

We have seen growth in many ways, through the school, toddlers, Oasis, CAP, LWLW to name but a few. This growth means that the parish needs adequate resourcing. To this end, conversations have been happening with the diocese as to how the church will be supported when Caroline moves on. We are now on the list for a curate in the 2020 round but not in time for this year. The PCC are in the process of negotiations and engagement with the Diocese. Please pray for PCC during this process as this is a priority.

When Caroline moves on, we need support with the toddlers ministry. Please pray for this. If interested please speak with John or Caroline.

One of the areas in which we can improve is that of communication and this project has started with a new style church magazine. It will move on to encompass our website, emails and so on. Any comments about our communications welcome.

We need to continue to invest in pastoral ministry and look at how we support this in a sustainable way.

Open up to the community so that we see more people come to faith. We haven't seen a fraction of what God wants to do in this place. We need to step out, be open and see God move. Many people feel we are due a revival in this country. We need to pray for this revival, for God to move. Every week, we see new people come to church. Please make them feel welcome. Encourage and bless those who are serving.

John said that his family moved to Ware eight years ago, and it is a privilege to be a part of this community. Thank you for your support.

The Church Wardens report – Bob Barker.

We live in an exciting and unique time in the 160 years of this church's history. Many people have worked so hard to discern what the way forward with the building project. Whilst we do not have all the funds needed, the assets are still worth more than the cost of the project.

Lots of work has been done. Bob would like to thank:

- The people who have been instrumental in setting up the temporary church. He especially would like to mention Ania Vaughan, Headteacher from Christchurch school who has been incredibly helpful and given far more than we asked for.
- Thank you to the congregation for flexibility. Over 1/3 way through and it won't be long before we are back in the church.
- Thank you to Martin Dudley for his knowledge, experience and ability to answer difficult questions.
- Thank you to our **John** for his leadership of the church keeping us in line with the vision and Heather for her support. As warden I have seen what is involved in leading a church like ours, thank you John for your commitment and willingness to deal with

the challenges that have come our way over the year. John is at his happiest when he has a whiteboard and a pen.

- Bob said that John had already thanked a number of the people he was planning on thanking.

Christ Church is a growing church, bucking the general trend in the country that is seeing church attendance decline. Attendance at both Sunday morning services has seen an increase. Bob reiterated his concern that John will be on his own from Sept. Bob explained that this has been an issue which has been raised with the Diocese on numerous occasions since 2016, when the wardens at the time put a case for another clergy member. PCC are still dealing with this and trying to get a resolution so we would ask for prayer.

The plaque in church in memory of Edmund Smith-Hanbury, who died in 1913, has the inscription, **'He served his generation according to the will of God.'**

This can be our objective as we aim to serve our community and generation according to the will of God; at the same time modernising our church building to meet the needs of future generations.

Cheryl added that it has been a privilege to serve as warden over the last year and reminded us of our tag. Jesus led, spirit empowered, grace based.

Question about what led Bob to feel the way forward re the building was correct. Bob said that the turning point for him was when Sam said " Whilst we do not yet have all the funds we need so far, the amount we are committing to today is still less than the assets of the charity".

Question re whether there is hope that Diocese will do something given the work which CCW does, the growth and so on. Can they make exception to their rulebound lives. John answered that unfortunately, we work within this system but we always resource and bless others. We have had some good conversations but we need continued prayer. A further comment was made that we should be concerned about the impact on John from the lack of support.

We were reminded that Rosie and Paul Watson were stepping back from a number of their roles within the church and they were thanked for all they have done. John asked us to pray for blessing as they celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary this weekend.

Bob asked John and heather to step forward so that we could pray for them.

John Hookway then asked if there was AOB? None

The date for the next Annual Parochial meeting will be Wed 24th April 2019 at 7.45 pm preceded by a time of worship. The venue will be announced in the spring of 2019 as hopefully work will have commenced upon the church building.