

Minutes of the Meeting of St. James P.C.C.

Monday 14th December 2020

The meeting was held on Zoom due to Covid-19 restrictions

Present: Rob Powell, Johan Allen, Nick Burt, Liz Gibbons, Glynis Wilkinson, Stepheney Sulaiman, Adam Seymour-Davies, John Farebrother, Millie Miller, Marcia Gordon, Ailie Neill, Peter Neill, Alan Burrows, Lisa Burrows, Katherine Striesow, Jacqueline Gray.

1. Welcome: Rob welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a special welcome to new members. He then opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies: John Talbot

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting from Monday 28th September 2020 were approved unanimously.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

a) Fire Safety (Item 4a)

We are still awaiting quotes for the final items (two fire doors and the kitchen hatch).

b) Services & Activities (Item 5)

Rob reported that the church building was closed during the latest full lock down, but since early December we have been able to show the service on screen in church as well as online. The exception to this will be on Christmas Day when a live Communion service will be held in church at 9.30am in addition to an online All Age Service. Midweek children's groups are still closed, but Beth produced a special Pumpkin page for Halloween and will be producing an online Christingle with a make-your-own pack being delivered to all children. A pastoral plan is being developed for Christmas with those living alone particularly in mind.

c) Parish Support Fund (Item 6b)

The Archdeacon has written to accept our pledge of £80,300 for 2021.

d) APCM (Item 8)

The delayed APCM took place on 19th October and all positions were filled, with the exception of 2 PCC places for 2 years. These will be carried forward to next year.

5. Finance Report:

a) Management Accounts:

Alan presented the management accounts to the end of November which showed an income of £171,726 and an expenditure of £170,518. This is a remarkable position given the exceptional circumstances and challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic.

b) Advent Gift Day 2020

Alan reported that on the first Sunday of the Gift Day over £5,000 was donated inclusive of Gift Aid. This is a great start towards the target of £17,000.

c) Staff Salaries 2021

The PCC agreed salary increases as follows: Beth Powell, Jo Seymour-Davies and David Burrows to £10.85 per hour (London Living Wage), Olivia Alman increase of 1% (this is in line with the LLW increase and also a median between the expected inflation rate for 2020 of 0.8% and that for 2021 of 1.2%). All increases were approved unanimously.

d) Draft Budget 2021

Alan presented the draft budget for 2021 showing an expected income of £203,170 and expenditure of £228,808. When the remaining BFK feasibility study costs and the contingency figure are accounted for this

shows a budgeted deficit of just over £5,000. Rob indicated that the figure for hall rentals may be higher than anticipated as ABC Ballet will return to a rental charge almost comparable to their pre-Covid figure from January. The budget will be finally approved at the January meeting after any amendments are made.

6. Fabric & Buildings

a) Building for the Kingdom

Nick Burt gave an update on the progress of the feasibility study which has been moving at a slower pace due to the pandemic. JBKS have presented their initial ideas to the Working Group and will present amended ideas based on feedback, probably in January. There are plans for JBKS to then meet with the PCC and congregation. It was stressed that no plan has been finally agreed yet, everything is subject to discussion and will have to gain the approval of local authority planners and the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Council).

b) Quinquennial Inspection Schedule

The quinquennial inspection of the church building, exterior and interior, was carried out in August and the report makes numerous recommendations, graded A: To be done asap, B: 1-2 years, and C: By next quinquennial in 2025. A sub-group has created a schedule based on the A and B items to provide a programme of works for the next 1-2 years. A further schedule will then be devised covering the remaining items. Nick pointed out that most of the 'big ticket' items, such as stonework, should be left until the BFK project, but we should ensure we keep a close eye on those items ensuring health and safety standards are maintained.

Pause for Prayer

7. Living in Love and Faith (LLF)

Rob updated the PCC on the progress of the Living in Love and Faith project, the Church of England's response to issues of human identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. He explained that the historic understanding of the C of E, based on Scripture and rooted in creation, has come under pressure in recent years, both in society and in the church. LLF is a suite of resources designed to enable parishes to discuss the issues in a healthy way. Parishes are asked to engage with the resources in 2021 and to offer feedback. A Next Steps Group of bishops will then consider whether any proposals for change should be put to General Synod in 2022.

Rob stressed the seriousness of the issue which could lead to a split in the Church of England, either formally or informally, whatever decisions are made in 2022. He suggested therefore that St James should engage with the process, so that there would be a foundation upon which any future decisions by PCC could be made. He proposed that the 5-week course, provided in the resources, would be the most accessible way for St James to engage. However, he shared his concerns about the course, in particular its handling of Scripture. He suggested that the course would need to be carefully led, with additional information being offered, to avoid giving participants the impression that multiple interpretations of Scripture are equally valid. Several members of PCC suggested that this would be inappropriate as it would skew the discussion and possibly even close it down.

A decision has yet to be made about how and when to run the course.

8. Appointment of PCC Officers

The following appointments were agreed: Vice Chair: Adam Seymour-Davies, Secretary: Adam Seymour-Davies, Electoral Roll Officer: Glynis Wilkinson, Treasurer: Alan Burrows.

9. Safeguarding Update

There were no safeguarding issues or concerns to report. The PCC approved Judy Douglas and Stepheney Sulaiman to continue as our PSOs for another year.

10. Any Other Business

No-one had anything to raise.

11. Future Dates

- Next PCC Meetings: Monday 18th January, 8pm & Monday 15th March, 8pm

The meeting concluded at 10.00 with the Grace.