

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of All Saints Church, Hertford
Held in St John's Hall on Sunday 14th April 2013**

Present: As for Vestry Meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

As for the Vestry Meeting.

2. Minutes of the 2012 Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The minutes were approved by the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Election of PCC Members

Those that have one or two years remaining of the three year cycle:

Kay Povey-Richards – proposed by Andrew Povey-Richards and seconded by Colin Bird.

Rosemary Bolton – proposed by Ann Stephens-Jones and seconded by Colin Bird.

Fiona Earle – proposed by Ann Stephens-Jones and seconded by Jean Lord.

Edwin Godfrey – proposed by Fiona Earle and seconded by Colin Bird.

Marion Hassell – proposed by Andrew Povey-Richards and seconded by Kay Povey-Richards.

Helen Wright – proposed by Andrew Povey-Richards and seconded by Kay Povey-Richards.

The following were elected to serve for a three year period:

Andrew Povey-Richards – proposed by Kay Povey-Richards and seconded by Fiona Earle.

Stephen Bardle – proposed by Kay Povey-Richards and seconded by Andrew Povey-Richards.

Wendell Newbold – proposed by Fiona Earle and seconded by Jean Lord.

Judy Oughton – proposed by Fiona Earle and seconded by Colin Bird.

Martin Penny – proposed by Ann Stephens-Jones and seconded by Colin Bird.

Renee Booker – proposed by Ann Stephens-Jones and seconded by Colin Bird.

Tony Weeden – proposed by Fiona Earle and seconded by Derek Westwood.

Sandra Weeden – proposed by Fiona Earle and seconded by Derek Westwood.

Martin Bird – proposed by Jo Loveridge and seconded by Kay Povey-Richards.

Jo thanked all the PCC members for putting themselves forward. Colin explained that PCC members are Trustees of the Charity and said he would explain this in more detail to new members.

5. Election of Sidespersons

Richard Toyn, as Team Leader, thanked all the current Sidespersons for the valuable support they give to the smooth running of our church services. They provide a welcoming, friendly face, especially for visitors and new members of the congregation which is extremely valuable.

Richard proposed that the following 26 members of the congregation be accepted as Sidespersons for the coming year:

Mr Ajao, Mr Allum, Mrs Barron, Mrs Cole, Mr Colin Bird, Mr Martin Bird, Mr Dilley, Mr & Mrs Dean, Dr & Mrs Earle, Mr Huxford, Mr & Mrs Graves, Mr & Mrs Leach, Mr Mansfield, Mr Murkin, Miss Nailer, Mr Neale, Mr Newbold, Mr Poole, Mr & Mrs Toyn, Mr James Toyn and Mr Westwood. These were approved by the meeting.

26 Sidespersons does leave us a bit short and Richard said that more volunteers would be appreciated. This is not an onerous task and anyone who feels they could help should speak to Richard, the Churchwardens or one of the Sidespersons. The 8.00 am Holy Communion service has its own little group.

Richard went on to say that we also need more people to act as Vergers for additional services, and anyone interested should speak to Derek Westwood, Jo Loveridge or one of the Churchwardens. Jo explained that vergers play a very worthwhile part, especially in welcoming at Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals.

6. Financial Report for 2012

Colin Bird, the Treasurer, presented the formal charity accounts which had been approved by the PCC as Trustees on 13th March 2013. A Trustees' Report had also been prepared which is required by legislation.

Colin said that the accounts were in good shape apart from the rise in heating costs. The income overall was higher than 2012, totaling £117,000 against £107,000. However, £129,000 was spent against £109,000. We lost £11,150, of which around £5,290 was general funds and £5,860 restricted funds ie fabric, music and organ. The £5,290 deficit is the real problem, although we still have £32,000 of general reserves. We have cash of £70,000.

We have income of £6,000 from St John's Hall and £6,000 from Soundbites. However, we are struggling as we have drawn £12,000 which we don't do normally. We are £17,000 worse off than we were before the utility prices went up. We have asked the Hall to stop adding to its reserves. We have a deficit of £5,000 in 2012 and this needs to be addressed.

Our biggest problem is heating costs and we need to find ways of raising our income, ie letting the church for wider community use.

£46,742 comes from planned giving and this is tax efficient. Baptisms did fairly well last year; however weddings didn't do quite as well. We received interest of £675.

Regarding grants and donations, our donation to the Diocese is a charitable donation. We gave £2,000 in choir scholarships and £2,000 in teaching awards.

Heating costs rose from £9,000 to £14,000 – five years ago it was £3,000 – going up 400% over five years. Although giving has increased, it has not kept pace with this rise. This is very serious and we had a £1,900 gas bill in March and have spent £12,000 on gas since January. We do have reserves, but we cannot continue to draw on them.

Church Activities

Memorial Fund – The legacy from Margaret Phillips has paid for our new hymn books. £3,000 from Connie Murkin's legacy will pay for the new noticeboards which have been ordered and are currently being made. There is currently a total of £40,000 in the Memorial Fund.

St John's Hall has a general reserve of £4,711.36 and a maintenance reserve of £33,750.00, making a total of £38,461.36.

Junior Church has done well and a reasonable donation will go to Send A Cow.

Flower Club – The lower number of weddings has affected the Flower Club. More weddings have been booked for this year, although Dorothy reported that brides are cutting costs and flowers are often the first to go.

Art Group – The Art Group has a good surplus.

Mothers' Union has a surplus of £15.00 with £716 in the bank.

Colin said that all the groups are doing well, although we will keep a watching brief on the Flower Club's costs. Dorothy thanked everyone who had contributed money towards the Easter flowers.

Budget

We had a £5,200 deficit in 2012. The budget was approved by the PCC on 13th March. Colin said that planned giving needs to go up if we are to cope with the rising heating costs. We are facing a similar year to 2012, possibly worse, and we need to respond. It may be worth having a special heating fund, and also some social events to support this.

Gerry asked if it would be possible to raise the costs of hiring out the church and the hall, but not so much as to put people off. Colin said that prices for the hall had been increased. Martin said that we could increase the charges for hiring the church, but we would need to deliver what we are charging for. It is not always possible to ensure that broken light bulbs are replaced immediately and the church would always need to be cleaned. Martin feels that we have increased the costs as much as we can. Also, audience numbers have dropped. However, Martin did say that it would be worth looking at this again, and it would be helpful if people could volunteer to show organisations round the church and persuade them to use it.

Jo had asked all the schools and organisations who used the church in December to consider making a donation. This resulted in us receiving £1,000 at the time and we have received £500 since. Any information on how much other churches are charging would be helpful.

The meeting noted the Financial Report and Jo thanked Colin for all his hard work, and for explaining it so clearly.

Jo also expressed her thanks to Malcolm & Judy Oughton for all their hard work on stewardship.

7. Election of an Independent Examiner for the accounts

Charles Murkin agreed to continue as the Independent Examiner and this was agreed unanimously. Jo and Colin thanked Charles for the huge amount of work he puts into examining the accounts. Charles said he is happy to continue, but we should think about lining up someone else to take this over.

8. Reports

The following reports were circulated and are attached to these minutes:

- Deanery Synod
- Junior Church
- Child Protection
- The Choir
- Mothers' Union
- Flower Club
- Art Group
- St John's Hall
- Churches Together

Jo explained that we need a third representative on Deanery Synod. She said it is a democratic process, and also the meetings have some interesting speakers.

9. The Churchwardens' Report

Andrew Povey-Richards reported on the success of Prayers & Bears and Messy Church. He also explained that a Pastoral Care Group had been set up to look out for anyone missing from church so that they can be contacted, and if necessary visited and/or taken Holy Communion. He also reported on the successful services that now take place monthly at Bircherley Court, and the success of Helen Wright's Prayer Group. We have had a regular pattern of Compline and Healing services on Sunday evenings, and many successful Christmas services were held by local schools. We held a Wedding Couples' preparation evening in February which was well attended by couples getting married this year and next. Dorothy gave a talk and demonstration on flowers and Martin played a selection of wedding music

Andrew said that we are looking forward to welcoming our new Team Curate, Ginni Dear, and also Martin Bird who will be working with Jo and exploring his ministry in the parish.

Janet Bird reported that we now have two pianos; one donated by Gerry which is in the Memorial Chapel, enabling us to have music at Evensong services during the summer. We also have the Toyn's piano in the Hall which enables us to have music at the Tea & Thanksgiving services and Messy Church.

Janet reported one bit of bad news – the south aisle roof is leaking. Sometime in the future we will need to raise money to repair the whole church roof.

The noticeboards should be ready within the next few weeks. Dedications to Connie Murkin and Peter Stubbs will appear on the back of the boards.

The Kempe Window was repaired during the year and Jo thanked everyone for their generous donations.

It is planned to improve the lighting in the Memorial Chapel and we have received a grant of £1,200 from the Town Council which can be used for this work. Several lighting companies have been consulted and a meeting is being held this week to take this forward.

We were told about a Chancel Repair Liability and Janet is looking into this. She is going to see Emma Critchley at the Diocese to find out what needs to be done. We will need to inform the Charity Commissioner about any decision we make.

During the year we had broken windows in the vestry caused by vandalism, and this was paid for by the insurance.

We are still waiting for the faculty to remove the pews. Once this is received, we will start moving them on a small scale initially. This will provide more space for fellowship at the back of church.

Janet thanked the Work Parties for everything they do in maintaining the church, in particular Derek Westwood for organising them. Derek thanked Jean for her support.

We have had some enjoyable social events, although not as many as we would have liked due to the fact that the organisation falls on the same people. Janet would love to hear from anyone who would like to organise an event.

We have enjoyed some wonderful services over the past year, and it was great to see so many attending the team service at Pentecost.

Janet also reported that as from January 2014 we will be joining the Parish Energy Basket. Colin then explained that churches are aware of the huge amount of money being spent, especially on heating. The Church of England buys £35m of gas each year and is hopeful that a saving of 15% can be made, which will be shared among the parishes. The PCC has agreed that we should join this scheme and Colin is taking this forward.

10. The Vicar's Report

How wonderful it is to be part of the great family of All Saints!
Thank you to you **all** for making it such a great place to be the parish priest.
It is always difficult to work out who to name particularly, so if I have missed people, I can only apologise!

My thanks go to:

First, I would like to thank Andrew for all his tremendous and "24 – 7" work here at

All Saints. He has served us so cheerfully, enthusiastically and without complaint! Andrew has always put enthusiasm, welcome and service at the heart of his role as Churchwarden. He retires this year from being Church warden and from work in the summer as he has reached a certain age and he intends to travel with Kay and spend more time following his beloved cricket; however, he has generously said that he will stay and serve on the PCC.

To Kay, for all her brilliant, super-efficient work as my honorary personal assistant. For her work organising Prayers and Bears, baptisms and weddings.

Janet and Colin Bird for the amazing work they do and for their loyalty and support as warden, lay reader, treasurer, so many hats worn in the parish, deanery and diocese!

Geoff and Kath Oates for their great work with families and children with Family Services, Messy Church and Junior Church.

Gerry and Renee for their support of all things All Saints.

Martin Penny and Mary for commitment to the development of our music and our growth as a church. For Martin's work as Parish Administrator, setting up the brilliant new website, the envy of other churches, the magazine and sorting our many church bookings .

Chris Benham for the wonderful Soundbites concerts.

Megan Roworth for her cheerful and tactful role as hall administrator and Tony

James for ensuring that St John's Hall is making a profit and to Gavin.

Derek, as clerk of works and his team for keeping the buildings comfortably heated, maintained and our running costs as low as possible.

Dorothy and the Flower Club for ensuring that the church flowers are always superb and Richard for continuing to work quietly in the background.

Don and Rosemary for the extraordinary amount of work they both do especially behind the scenes.

Janet Oldham for all her encouraging work, back and front of house.

The Choir and Benedict Wilson, (congratulations to Ben on becoming DOM of Holy Trinity, Stratford on Avon) for their wholehearted contribution to the beauty of praise and worship.

Linda Dye who cleans all the church linen so carefully and who works so often in the background of many of our church events.

Helen Wright and her ministry of prayer and visiting, taking Holy Communion to the housebound and her work as Child Protection officer.

Marion and Gillian for their children's work.

The great Family Service activities that Rosie Dean puts together.

Tony and Sandra cleaning the brass and coffee.

Malcolm and Judy for their work as stewardship organisers.

To Charles Murkin for auditing our accounts.

To those clean the church week after week.

Those who make coffee.

Those who welcome.

To our bell ringers.

Those who work with our young people.

Brian Dilley working quietly back of house.
Fiona and John for their tireless gifts of welcome and charity work.
For members of the PCC and committee members and all the work they do for the life of All Saints.
Our readers and intercessors who deepen our worship.
The Vergers, sides people and welcomers who make sure that everyone is noticed and welcomed warmly.
Thank you to you all for your visiting and pastoral care for members of All Saints and beyond, your love, generous support and prayers.
Thank you all as it would not be a family without each one of you.

What a year it has been:

record numbers attending services over Christmas and Easter! The welcome, worship, music and art, beauty and a deepening spirituality, all flourishing.
Stewardship and generosity were high priorities, with great generosity shown for the East Window repairs.

We have enjoyed wonderful social events, such as the soiree in Janet and Colin's beautiful house and garden, Showstoppers, Doug's 60th

The come and sing Messiah, the 70's night, our welcome parties arranged by Andrew and Kay for newcomers and the Tea and Thanksgiving, arranged by Janet for our senior people. We have a flourishing confirmation group and the confirmation will be on June 5th 2013.

We now have a wonderful and updated website.

We have been welcomed into the Greater Churches Group of Churches. We are at last a Fairtrade church.

Good links continue to be built up with the Team, we had a fantastic Pentecost service with Dean Jeffrey John. Great links with Churches Together, with the Jubilee and Week of Prayer services held at All Saints and now Hertford has its own food bank. We enjoy excellent networks and opportunities to participate in civic events and school events, and as a result sometimes find that it is not easy to fit everything into the church's calendar!

We continue to grow and develop, working to ensure that every member of our church feels that they each have a vital part to play in participating in the work of sharing God's love.

I very much look forward to another successful year ahead as we are joined on the Ministry Team by Martin Bird, who is exploring his vocation, and the Team Curate Ginni Dear, who comes in July.

Do you remember from childhood the idea of treasure maps? Perhaps influenced by Treasure Island where x marks the spot, well, here at All Saints' the church is that cross that marks the spot. The place where our true treasure is. Christ leads us and here and now we find ourselves privileged to be part of the body of Christ and the communion of All Saints. We are enabled to see beyond ourselves as individuals and see the bigger picture and continue to share God's love by being caring in all our relationships and welcoming and open to all people.

11. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 1.35 pm.