

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of All Saints, Hertford
Held in St John's Hall on Sunday 19th April 2015**

Present: As for Vestry Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence

As for the Vestry Meeting.

2. Minutes of the 2014 Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The minutes were approved by the meeting.

3. Election of PCC Members

The following have one or two years remaining of the three year cycle:
Andrew Povey-Richards – proposed by Helen Harvey-Wright and seconded by Rosie Dean.

Edwin Godfrey – proposed by Rosemary Bolton and seconded by Ann Stephens-Jones.

Wendell Newbold – proposed by Diana Cook and seconded by David Dean.

Judy Oughton – proposed by Martin Bird and seconded by Rosie Dean.

Martin Penny – proposed by Rachel Morgan and seconded by Ann Stephens-Jones.

Renee Booker – proposed by Ann Stephens-Jones and seconded by Janet Oldham.

Tony Weeden – proposed by Janet Oldham and seconded by Diana Cook.

Sandra Weeden – proposed by Janet Oldham and seconded by Diana Cook.

Marion Hassell – proposed by Rosemary Bolton and seconded by Ann Stephens-Jones.

Rosemary Bolton – proposed by Ann Stephens-Jones and seconded by Helen Harvey-Wright.

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

Kay Povey-Richards – proposed by Derek Westwood and seconded by David Dean.

Dorothy Toyn – proposed by Janet Bird and seconded by Kay Povey-Richards.

5. Election of Sidespersons

Richard Toyn, the Sidespersons' Co-ordinator, was unable to attend the meeting and had submitted a report in which he thanked all the current Sidesmen for the valuable support they give to the smooth running of our church services.

He highlighted their behind the scenes activities that often go unnoticed; the welcoming, friendly face, especially for visitors and new members of the congregation is extremely valuable.

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

Mr Ajao, Mrs Barron, Mrs V Cole, Mr Colin Bird, Mr Martin Bird, Mr Dilley, Mr & Mrs Dean, Dr & Mrs Earle, Mr Huxford, Mr & Mrs Graves, Mrs J Kruger, Mr & Mrs Leech, Mr Murkin, Miss E Nailer, Mr Newbold, Mr Poole, Mr Rice, Mr & Mrs Toyn, Mr James Toyn, Mr Weeden and Mr Westwood.

The proposed list of Sidespersons was approved by the meeting.

Richard also thanked those members of the congregation who are not on the list of Sidesmen, but offer assistance in times of need.

The number of members of the congregation who are Sidesmen is falling, which in the very near future will lead to the need to reduce the number of teams from the current six to possibly four, consequently increasing the frequency when teams are needed. Therefore, to be able to keep six teams, we need to increase the number of Sidesmen by at least four, or more likely six. Hence, if anyone would like to know more about how they could help by being a Sidesman, then please speak to one of the Churchwardens, one of the Sidesmen, or Richard Toyn.

Vergers

The Vergers are volunteers who perform similar duties as Sidesmen at scheduled services, but at irregular services – funerals, weddings and baptisms.

All Saints is currently short of Vergers, and we would like to increase the number to spread the load.

In essence, the role of Verger is to open the church in preparation for the appropriate non-scheduled service, welcome the congregation as they arrive, distribute the service material, assist the clergy as necessary, collate any monies gathered and store in a safe place, and at the end of the service, gather the service material and finally close the church.

If anyone feels they would like to help as a Verger, on an occasional basis, or more regularly, they should speak with the Vicar, Derek Westwood or one of the Churchwardens.

6. Financial Report

Colin Bird explained that as All Saints is a charity, the accounts are set out in the way required by the Charities Commission. The PCC members are the trustees.

Regarding giving, we budgeted for £54,000 in 2014 and received £60,000 which is very good news. Colin thanked everyone for their generosity. Regarding income tax, we budgeted for £15,000 and received £18,000 due to the new Small Donations Gift Aid Scheme. St John's Hall donated £6,000 to the PCC and still made a profit. For donations we budgeted for £10,000 and received £5,500. Soundbites brought in £3,500 towards heating etc. For baptisms, weddings and funerals we budgeted for £9,000 and received £11,000.

Magazines made a surplus of £370. Church hire was on budget. For events the budget was £6,000 and we made £7,000. This was due to the Posy Festival and Christmas Bazaar. Overall the income was £115,000 against a budget of £108,000, making 2014 a very good financial year.

Regarding expenditure, 2014 was a good year as it was the warmest year on record and we spent £5,500 less on gas. We used two thirds of our normal consumption.

The Choir made some money on CDs and the supplementary organists' cost was on budget. Choir pay was slightly less than budget. Insurance cost was £800 over budget as the insured value has increased from £11m to £15m. Admin costs were on budget.

Our Diocesan contribution was £63,000 – this is our biggest charitable donation; however, 87% of this comes back to support the clergy.

Overall expenditure was around £109,000 and we made a surplus of £6,000 on our general account.

The Standing Committee gave £1,000 to the Street Pastors and we transferred £5,000 to the Fabric Fund and £1,500 to the Organ Fund.

We made a profit of £900 compared to the budget.

Colin said that overall this is an extremely good result from a general funds point of view.

A break even budget for 2015 was approved by the PCC. The Diocesan contribution has gone up to £65,725.

General Accounts

These accounts are in the form of the Trustees' Report.

Colin thanked Geoffrey Rice for taking over from Charles Murkin as the Independent Examiner.

The total restricted funds were £48,000. The unrestricted funds on the general account were £35,913 which is 20% of our annual expenditure. The general funds were within the Charity Commission guidelines.

The charitable donations were £72,700. Teaching awards and choir scholarships come from the Music Development Fund (MDF) and these are funded by income from Soundbites. The remainder comes from services, including the Royal British Legion from the Remembrance Day service. Money from the Christingle Service goes to the Children's Society, and money from the Team Service goes to the Bishop's Ordinands Fund. The Mothers Union also gives money to charities.

Restricted Funds

These funds can only be used for specific purposes. The most important of these is the Fabric Fund; this started 2014 at £19,000. We have received donations from the produce stall, spent £5,000 on general repairs and transferred £5,000 into it, so at the end of the year we had £21,636. However this year we have had to replace one of the boilers and the pump and this has cost £10,000. It is possible the other boiler may need to be replaced soon which would bring the total cost to £18,000. We have this money available, but if anything else goes wrong there will be no reserves to pay for the repair. Special envelopes have been put in the pews for donations and it is hoped that the congregation will give generously.

For the Re-ordering Fund we received a donation of £5,000 and this will be used for re-ordering the back of church.

The MDF started the year with £13,441 and ended with £13,402. Most of this is profit from Soundbites. A few years ago it was larger than this but it has been agreed that it would be reduced to the current level. The Organ Fund has £5,600.

The Heating Fund has £2,700 which came from donations. We are now in the Church of England Energy Basket, which is the parish buying scheme. £1,900 has been spent on gas this quarter. The Cull Heating Fund provides income towards the cost of heating. The rate of interest is now 4%.

The total restricted funds started the year at £39,000 and ended at £48,000 and this is a good result.

Colin thanked Judy & Malcolm Oughton for all their hard work each Sunday dealing with the collection money and gift aid. He also thanked Julia Gough who has taken over the white envelope scheme, and other members of the team who help with counting money. Colin also thanked Geoffrey Rice for his work as Independent Examiner.

Jo thanked Colin for all his hard work as Treasurer, and for making the accounts clear and easy for us to understand. Jo also thanked the congregation for their generosity with increased giving and donations.

Church Activities

The Memorial Fund has spent £500 on new altar clothes. We have £32,000 still in the bank.

The Sworder Grave Trust has built up to £2,400. This money is not spent by All Saints as the Town Council look after the churchyard, and it has been agreed that we give them £800 in recognition for this work.

The Shepherd Fund, consisting of £1,600, has expired and we could use this money.

David Phillips gives £500 each year to the Margaret Phillips Memorial Fund in memory of his late wife. Jo and Colin will ask David what he would like this to be used for.

Geoffrey Rice has examined these accounts.

St John's Hall showed a very good result with income increased to £18,000 compared with £17,000 in previous year. Total expenditure was £11,000. This produced a £7,000 surplus and £6,000 was transferred to the PCC. The Hall now has more reserves than the Church. There is a £2,500 general reserve and a £34,000 maintenance reserve.

Junior Church receives money from the Cow Bucket and plant sale and has sent £500 to the Send A Cow project. There is £377 in the bank which is good. Colin said that Junior Church had done well.

The Flower Club did very well in 2014 due to the Posy Festival, making £4,800 against £1,000 the previous year. They gave money to the PCC and had a surplus of £500. They have £650 in the bank.

The Art Group received £450 in subscriptions. They donated £300 to the church in 2014 and have £500 in the bank.

The Mothers' Union income was £533 with expenditure of £600. They carry the next year's subs in their cash and this appears like a deficit due to losing two members. However, they have £629 in the bank and this is a healthy result.

Colin thanked Tony James for examining these accounts.

7. Election of an Independent Examiner for the accounts

Geoffrey Rice was proposed by Colin Bird and seconded by Derek Westwood.

8. Reports

Reports relating to Deanery Synod, Junior Church, Churches Together, Child Protection, The Choir, Mothers Union, Flower Club, Art Group and St John's Hall are available at the back of church.

In addition to the Choir report, Martin Penny reported that Christopher Joyce, Assistant Director of Music, had decided to leave All Saints. A replacement will not be sought for the time being and we will be running with Martin, David Ford, and hearing more from Michael Stephens-Jones. Jo said that everyone is very impressed with Michael and it is a joy to see him succeeding so well.

9. The Churchwardens' Report

Janet Bird reported on the fabric aspects of the church. Due to the generosity of a member of the congregation and a donation from the Town Council, we have been able to replace the lights in the Memorial Chapel, over the font and in the choir rehearsal area at no cost to the church. The lights will be programmed to dim and turn on individually this week.

Jo congratulated Janet on obtaining two faculties during her term as churchwarden.

The War Memorial near the font was cleaned in time for the WWII service in September.

It is planned to remove some pews at the back of church to create more space, and we would eventually like to improve the kitchen facilities. We can only do this if people give money to the church through donations and fundraising etc.

The Ecclesiastical Insurance representative reported asbestos in the boiler room. This was found on the door which has now been painted with special paint. A handrail on the stairs has also been installed.

The Work Party continues to carry out ongoing repairs which make a real difference and Janet thanked Derek Westwood for co-ordinating this work. The church is in reasonably good condition. We have a Quinquennial Inspection next year.

Janet thanked everyone for their support during her term as Churchwarden. Jo said that she had been a brilliant Churchwarden and really values all the work she has done over her four year term.

Janet Oldham reported on the social events. In May 2014 Jo was installed as a Canon of St Albans Cathedral and we celebrated this with a delicious lunch. Later that month Ginni was ordained priest and we celebrated this with drinks and refreshments at the back of church.

In September we had a coffee morning which coincided with the Bike 'n Hike. We had a Harvest Supper and Quiz in October. The Christmas Bazaar was successful with children from St Joseph in the Park and Abel Smith school choirs coming to sing.

In January, Bishop Alan came to a morning service and this was followed by a lunch for all the parishes in the team organised by Janet Bird and her helpers.

The February Frolic was a great success, with excellent entertainment and it raised a lot of money. The coffee morning held on 18th April raised £350.

Janet thanked everyone for their support at these events. Future fund raising events include a coffee morning and plant sale on 23rd May, and a garden party with afternoon tea at the Birds' house on 18th July.

10. The Vicar's Report

Jo thanked everyone for their support, and gave special thanks to the following:

Ginni Dear, Janet Bird, Geoff Oates, Gerry Booker, Janet Oldham, Kay Povey-Richards, Colin Bird, Martin Penny, The Choir, Martin Bird, Derek Westwood, Marion Hassell, The PCC, Kath Oates, Nick Hoyle, Chris Benham, Ann Stephens-Jones and the Soundbites Caterers, Megan Roworth, Tony James, Dorothy Toyn, Wendell Newbold, Andrew Povey-Richards, Don & Rosemary Graves, The Mothers' Union, Linda Dye, Helen Harvey-Wright, Rosie Dean, Tony & Sandra Weeden, Malcolm & Judy Oughton, Julia Gough, Richard Toyn, The Social Team, The Cleaning Team, Coffee makers, Bellringers, everyone working with young people, Fiona & John Earle, Readers and Intercessors, Vergers, Sidespeople, the Pastoral Care Group, the Easter Journey Team, and the Gardening Team.

Jo said that everyone puts so much into making a difference to the church family. We want to build on our work with young people and we are looking at having a 'Christmas Journey' as well this year.

We have some exciting events coming up this year – the new Bishop of Hertford coming to us in May, the Archbishop of Canterbury's visit to St Albans in June, and the Licensing of Lay Readers service at All Saints later this year.

Jo is pleased with the growth of our church and the fact that it is such a lively place.

11. Any Other Business

John Earle highlighted the importance of sidesmen helping people on the step down from the Memorial Chapel after communion. Charles Murkin said he found this extremely helpful and thanked John and others for their assistance.

The meeting closed at 1.35 pm.