

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of All Saints, Hertford
Held in Church on Sunday 30th April 2017 at 12.10 pm**

Present: As for the Vestry Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence

As for the Vestry Meeting.

2. Minutes of the 2016 Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The minutes were approved by the meeting. Proposed by Jo Loveridge and seconded by Janet Oldham. All in favour.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. The Vicar's Report

Jo thanked Kay Povey-Richards, who is standing down as PCC Secretary after six years. She thanked Judy Oughton and Edwin Godfrey for their hard work on the PCC; they are both standing down from the PCC. Marion Hassell is standing down as Deputy Churchwarden, and Jo thanked her for all her hard work.

Jo also thanked Colin Bird, Janet Bird, Geoff Oates, Gerry Booker, Martin Penny, Mary Penny, Kath Oates, Martin Bird, Brian Dilley, David Dean and the Work Party, the Choir, Michael Stephens-Jones, David Ford, the PCC, Megan Roworth, Tony James, Wendell Newbold, Dorothy Toyn, Andrew Povey-Richards, Don Graves, Rosemary Graves, Chris Benham, Ann Stephens-Jones, Helen Harvey-Wright, Nick Hoyle, Linda Dye, Rosie Dean, Tony Weeden, Sandra Weeden, Malcolm Oughton, Richard Toyn, the Vergers, the Cleaning Team, Mothers' Union, the Easter Journey team and the Gardening Team.

Many people also work quietly behind the scenes and Jo said that everyone makes a difference to the life of the Church.

Jo then read a passage from Corinthians 12 about the Body of Christ, adding that each of us has a role to play in sharing the Gospel.

We have been thinking about what we are as a church. Jo mentioned a TV programme about hotels in different places around the world that are opening their doors to the local community and doing different things. She asked if we could model ourselves on these amazing hotels. Lots of the people take part and some have made considerable sacrifices in order to send their children to school. Without each of them, the hotel would not function. The idea is to build on the future and ensure the future is sustainable.

It is up to each of us to share the message of Jesus Christ with others. We have an amazing sacred space we can share with everyone and we all have a role to play.

Tools we can use are Living God's Love, Growing Together as a PCC, the outcome of our visit to the PCC from Bishop Michael, Leading our Church into Growth and our new Mission Group. Sustainability is really vital as well.

Although the accounts are going quite well, we need to ensure that we grow in numbers and use the space, including the Church Hall and Annex.

We will be looking with Heartedge to make our building pay. Jo hopes and prays that everyone will engage with the mission of the church. The Mission Group will be "hands on", not a committee. We are also planning a Pilgrim Course in September for those who want to explore their faith. We are focusing on key services where we can invite people who don't usually come to church; the Mothering Sunday service was successful in this respect and the next one will be Harvest.

Jo encouraged everyone to bring friends who don't normally attend church to our social events.

Jo hopes that we can all work together and rise to this challenge.

Safeguarding

Jo read out the updated Safeguarding Policy which has been adopted by the PCC, and confirmed that the PCC is now compliant with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 20/6 ("The Measure") (duty to have due regard to the Church of England House of Bishops' Guidance on Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). It was noted that the updated policy follows and is consistent with the House of Bishops papers "Protecting All God's Children" 4th edition 2010, "Promoting a Safe Church" 2006 and Safer Recruitment Policy 2015 (Church of England and Methodist Church).

5. Election of Parochial Church Councillors

The following have one or two years remaining of the three year cycle:

Dorothy Toyn – proposed by Colin Bird and seconded by Renee Booker.

Andrew Povey-Richards – proposed by Helen Harvey-Wright and seconded by Gerry Booker.

Wendell Newbold – proposed by Dorothy Toyn and seconded by Renee Booker.

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

Helen Harvey-Wright – proposed by Jo Loveridge and seconded by Ann Stephens-Jones.

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

Marion Hassell – proposed by Helen Harvey-Wright and seconded by Michael Stephens-Jones.

Rosemary Bolton – proposed by Dorothy Toyn and seconded by Renee Booker.

Janet Oldham – proposed by Jo Loveridge and seconded by Renee Booker.

Jonathan Bates – proposed by Colin Bird and seconded by Renee Booker.

Ann Stephens-Jones – proposed by Rosemary Bolton and seconded by Fiona Earle.

Cheryl Massey – proposed by Jo Loveridge and seconded by Colin Bird.

Julia Gough – proposed by Colin Bird and seconded by Janet Bird.

All were in favour.

There are still vacancies on the PCC and if anyone would like to join and would like more information, they should speak to Jo or the Wardens. Additional members can be co-opted during the year. Also, if anyone would like to be PCC Secretary Jo asked that they prayerfully consider this and speak to her.

Deanery Synod Representatives

The following were elected to serve until the APCM 2018:

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

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

Dorothy Toyn – proposed by Colin Bird and seconded by Martin Bird.

All were in favour.

5. Election of Sidespersons

Richard Toyn thanked all the current sides people for the valuable support they give to the smooth running of our church services. At times, there are some behind the scenes activities that go unnoticed; however, the welcoming friendly face, especially for visitors and new members of the congregation is extremely valuable.

Richard proposed that the following members of the congregation be accepted as sides people for the coming year:

Mr Leon Ajao, Mrs Roz Barron, Mrs Valery Cole, Mrs Janet Bird, Mr Martin Bird, Mr Brian Dilley, Mr & Mrs Dean, Miss Janet Deakin, Mrs Fiona Earle, Mr & Mrs Graves, Mrs Helen Harvey-Wright, Miss Isobel Hurley, Mrs Jeanette Kruger, Mr & Mrs Leech, Miss Edwina Nailer, Mr Stuart Neale, Mr Wendell Newbold, Mrs Janet Oldham, Mr Geoffrey Rice, Mrs Dorothy Toyn, Mr James Toyn, Mr Mark Bartlett and Mrs Caroline Bartlett.

During the year our numbers have reduced, with the loss of Dr John Earle; the following do not want to continue – Mr Norman Huxford, Mr David Poole, Mr Derek Westwood, and Mr Tony Weeden, and with Mr Richard Toyn moving to the role of Churchwarden.

Richard thanked those members of the congregation, even though they are not on the list of Sidesmen, but give assistance in times of need, for the support they give.

The number of members of the congregation that are Sidesmen is falling. To be able to sustain our current six teams, we need to increase the number of Sidesmen. Hence, if anyone would like to know more about how they could help by being a Sidesman, they should speak to one of the Churchwardens or one of the Sidesmen.

Vergers

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

All Saints is currently short of Vergers, and we would like to increase the number of Vergers so as 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 (booklets, cards, hymn books, etc.), assist the clergy as necessary (eg operate the sound system), 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 or one of the Churchwardens.

7. Financial Report for 2016

Colin said income had reduced in 2016 by £10,000 compared to 2015 due in part to a loss of planned giving.

On the expenditure the Parish share had risen by £2,500 to £68,200, however the bill for gas had reduced significantly due to the mild winter and the bulk buying scheme. Colin said costs were under control and showed a reduction in 2016 over 2015 of £2,000.

Overall there had been a reduction in General Funds of £2,900 to £34,140.

The Fabric fund stood at £18,100 after just over £20,000 had been donated for the repair of the vestry roof, which cost about £26,600. £3,000 had been spent at the back of church to resolve electrical problems. £1,400 had been spent removing pews.

The MDF had income of £7,100 from Soundbites and expenditure of £7,800 which included £1,400 for scholarships, £3,400 for teaching and £3,000 towards church costs so it ended the year with £10,900.

The Memorial Fund had £42,700 after a gift of £12,500 (which included Gift Aid).

St. John's Hall made a surplus of £3,800 before giving the church £6,000 so ended up with a deficit of £2,200 and reserves of £34,400. All Church based groups had a satisfactory financial position.

Colin predicted income would be static for 2017. Costs would rise primarily because heating costs had been set at £10,000, above the £7,800 spent last year as we needed to allow for the possibility of worse weather.

He drew attention to the proposed budget predicting a substantial deficit of around £9,000. He was reluctant to do this but felt it was a realistic assessment and had recommended it for approval by the PCC. He said in the first quarter of 2017 there had been a deficit of £4,800 compared with a budgeted deficit of £3,300 but this was due to the timing of a heating bill.

In summary we are not paying our way – we spent £10,000 more than we got in in 2016. It looks likely we will have a similar deficit in 2017. We are heavily reliant on too few people making sizeable donations. We do not have sufficient money in our Fabric Fund to pay for any substantial works and we expect the Quinquennial to identify some necessary repairs. Our Organ Fund (at £7,500) is woefully short of what is needed to keep the organ in good repair.

8. Election of an Independent Examiner for the Accounts

Geoffrey Rice was proposed as the Independent Examiner for the PCC and St John's Hall by Colin Bird and seconded by Leon Ajao – all in favour.

9. Reports

Reports relating to the Flower Club, Get Up & Go Exercise Class, Safeguarding, Mothers' Union, Art Group, Junior Church, Deanery Synod and Music are available at the back of church.

Regarding St John's Hall, there is no Hall Committee so Colin Bird and Janet Oldham have been looking after the fabric of the Hall. £2,500 has been spent on the electrics. The Annex is currently out of commission due to vandalism.

Nick Hoyle suggested that in future there is a specific Bellringers' report as this is a specialist area.

10. The Churchwardens' Report

Janet Oldham reported that a great deal of work had been done during her four year term. The pew removal, which caused concern for quite a few people, has proved really useful. It has created a great space for coffee and occasional lunches, and has also been used by the Get Up & Go Exercise Class.

The pews in the south aisle are now permanently removed and we will be applying for a faculty to permanently remove the ones in the north aisle.

The annual inspection was carried out by Diana Perkins. Diana was very impressed with the way the church is being run by Jo.

The big issue recently was the vestry roof. The area of damage was actually very small but proved to be very costly. Janet thanked everyone who very generously donated funds in response to the appeal; these funds almost covered the repair costs. Another expensive repair was to the boiler room.

The Quinquennial Inspection was carried out by our Architect Francesca Weal. She was here for two and a half days with Janet and Brian Dilley. She found the church to be physically sound, although there is a Category 1 issue in the north porch. Storing items in the porch poses a serious fire risk and these were immediately removed by the Work Party. As the north porch is a fire exit it is essential that it is kept clear. If anyone has a storage issue, they should speak to Richard Toyn.

The water leak in the south aisle appears to be just drips caused by wind direction. Rather than opening up the roof, the builder has been asked to look into installing a special camera to see what is actually happening here.

Less serious things are the pointing around the windows, and removal of the moss that collects as this will erode the filling in the joints. We have about three years to do these less serious jobs.

The yew tree at the north porch is too close to the building. Francesca has recommended that this be removed in order to reduce the risk. The Town Council will speak to the tree preservation specialists about this. We can always plant another yew tree for much less than it would cost to repair damage to the north porch.

Janet thanked our Work Party, saying that we are truly blessed to have this jolly group who have saved All Saints a great deal of money. Extra hands would be very welcome, and if anyone feels they would like to join the Work Party they should speak to David Dean or Brian Dilley.

The Hall needs to be brought up to date and we now have new basins. The upstairs toilets need to be replaced.

Vandals have trashed the Annex three times and the Work Party have cleaned up a lot of mess afterwards. Because of the risk to the Hall, the canopy joining the Annex to the Hall has now been removed, including the cabling.

The lighting at the back of church has been repaired.

Janet thanked everyone for all their help and support over the last four years and said she has really enjoyed working with everyone.

11. Any Other Business

Nick Hoyle said that the bells haven't had an overhaul for 110 years and this is beginning to show. This would be a major cost issue.

Jo said that children are the lifeblood of the church and thanked Kath for her amazing work on this. She asked that everyone prays that we encourage more children to join the church.

The meeting closed at 1.05 pm with the Grace.