

ST PETER'S CHURCH, TIVERTON

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

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Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 11 April 2019  
at 7.15 p.m. in the Tiverton Baptist Church Hall

The Revd Robert Gordon was in the chair, and 30 members of St Peter's Church attended.

Apologies for absence were received from several members (cf. Vestry Meeting minutes).

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 19 April 2018 were approved and signed.

2 Appointment of tellers

Sue Beale and Derek Long were appointed as tellers in case of an electoral count's proving necessary later in the meeting.

3 Electoral Roll report

Catherine Makepeace reported that current membership of the freshly renewed Electoral Roll stands at 111 (27 residents in the parish; 84 non-residents), a net decrease of 40 in comparison with the previous Roll.

4 Safeguarding report

Catherine Makepeace, speaking as the parish's safeguarding representative, alerted those present to the pressing need to check that all the provisions required by the Diocese of Exeter and indeed the Church of England as a whole were in place locally. St Peter's was keenly aware of the need to observe the principles and the practices involved in the safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults. Those members of the church whose participation required that they undertake the courses of training had done so or were doing so, and reports were that these courses had been found very valuable. The training would need to be repeated every 3 years and be supplemented by DBS checks every 5 years.

Robert Gordon underlined the seriousness with which this issue was being treated, both in the parish and at diocesan level. 'Safeguarding' is an item on the agenda of every PCC meeting. He thanked Catherine Makepeace for the calm efficiency with which she had been administering our arrangements in this most sensitive of areas.

Members present received copies of two documents endorsed by the PCC: *St Peter's Statement on Domestic Abuse* and *Guidance for Lone Workers* (copies attached as appendices to these minutes).

5 Finance report

- 5.1 David Pope presented the Annual Report and the Church accounts, which had already been received and approved by the PCC and confirmed by Apsleys, and which had been made available to members online. He reported as follows:

Freewill giving, including tax recovered, at £49,553 was £1,500 below our budget (£51,100) and a similar figure below the previous year (£50,962). This partly reflected a small reduction in participants. The Parish Giving Scheme continues to be the mainstay of our freewill giving, with the average number of parishioners using the scheme now up to 43. A legacy of £1,000 from the estate of June Giles was much appreciated. Another notable item of income was two donations amounting to £2,465 from the Girdlers Company through the good offices of a parishioner who is a former master of the company. The PCC decided that *Seedtime to Harvest* gifts should be included in the fundraising category in future. On the expenditure side most was in line with expectations: we met our obligation to the Diocese in full at £51,268.

Due to the recent fall in the stock market and the sale of some shares to finance the Greenway Chapel repairs, our assets revaluation showed an increase of only £7,623.

Overall we had a deficit of £18,930 (expenditure £105,627 less income £86,697). *Time Together* and other youth work continues to be funded from the Fresh Expressions Fund and alternative venue costs are borne by the Church House Charity Fund. We continue to have the benefit of grants from the Amory Trust to fund music scholars who help to strengthen the choir. As ever, we greatly appreciate the efforts of our in-house printer/publisher in meeting almost all our needs in printed matter.

The meeting recorded its gratitude to the Treasurer for all his work on the accounts.

- 5.2 David Pope reported that at the March meeting of the PCC he had given notice that he would be retiring from the post of treasurer on 31 December this year. He said he would be very sorry to give up after 12 very rewarding years. It had been a privilege to have been able to serve St Peter's in this way.

So we need a new treasurer: this is a chance to serve the church with the minimum of disruption to one's own everyday life. It can be done entirely at home in one's own time, one does not have to attend church every Sunday, one does not have to be a member of the PCC although serving on the Finance Committee (5 meetings a year) is necessary. Some computer literacy is required but this need not be extensive. Time taken is in the region of an average of 5 hours a week plus a few extra at times, notably before committee meetings and at the year end.

He observed that he had been fortunate to have a lot of support from other church members: the Cashier and counting team led by Roy Webber, Ivor and Sue Atkins who look after the Magazine finances, Chris Burford who has the finance side of the Music Scholars and choir under his wing, Robert Gordon who currently keeps a record of weddings and funerals, the many involved in fund-raising events who hand their takings to the counting

team, and Helen Wakely who keeps the Parish Giving Scheme records. The treasurer does not handle any cash or cheques.

To get more information, the following can be contacted: David Pope (davidrgpope@btinternet.com or 250548), Rod Hilton (252330), Catherine Makepeace (257689) or William Zarrett (256803).

## 6 Fabric report

### 6.1 David Ricks, speaking for Gill Heard and himself as chair of the Fabric Committee, provided a report on the fabric during the last year, as follows:

2018 was the year for a new Quinquennial Inspection of St Peter's by Russ Palmer, our Church Architect. The report states that the church is generally in good structural condition. This year we are required to address the items in the report marked as urgent, to be completed within one year, so this report looks forward to those works.

The most significant is a group of works on the roof, which will all be undertaken as one contract. They include loose pinnacles, pointing to stonework, rendering repairs and refurbishment to the chimney over the vestry. This work will be undertaken during the summer months. Additionally, the window in the vestry, which is distorted and leaking, requires urgent refurbishment. This is planned for April 2019. An asbestos survey has been completed, finding only a small residue of asbestos in the boiler room. We will be able to undertake the necessary containment works ourselves.

Otherwise the regular maintenance inspections and servicing of all our facilities and systems has continued as normal without the discovery of any major or expensive problems. These visits mostly occur during the autumn and winter months, so we should be safe for the foreseeable future.

Once again we must be grateful for the unfailing support and hard work of our fabric team who week by week undertake a multiplicity of smaller jobs to keep St Peter's in good shape. They know who they are, and our thanks and appreciation, as always, is extended to them. One special mention for our "sparks" who masterminded the new, very successful, churchyard security floodlight. We plan more similar fittings.

### 6.2 David Ricks reported on recent developments in the re-ordering project, as follows:

This time last year we were in protracted discussions with the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee), as we had submitted to them an application for preliminary informal advice. This resulted in a number of meetings in church with representatives of the DAC and their timber specialists. We were able to establish their concerns, primarily with pew removal, and come to an understanding as to what information they require from us to allow them to support our application. We are hopeful that in gaining their agreement to our proposals, in principle, we have paved the way for a reasonably smooth final approval process.

The position with the design works is now as follows.

*Toilet block:* As this facility is external to the church it falls to the local authority to grant planning and listed building approval. The final design for this area is now with them and, having established agreement in principle last year, we now hope to receive full approval in April.

*Areas of change within the church:* The overall master plan for works within the church remains as established and instructed and as defined in the report to the APCM last year. The design of each of the various areas is progressing well, with meetings being held with the catering and children's teams to establish their needs.

The open area at the west end, the servery, the flower arrangers' facilities, the new location for the font, and the dais at the east end of the nave are all at an advanced agreed stage ready for final presentation.

The other areas – the children's area, the entrance porch, the bookstall/notice board, the office/meeting room and various storage cupboards – are not quite so advanced but the principles are now established and most necessary instructions have been confirmed. The architect needs our final thoughts on materials, colours and finishes.

The architect will shortly be preparing a display board for the back of the church to show the proposals to the congregation, prior to final submission to the DAC.

*Programme:* We have instructed the architect to plan for a commencement on site in early 2020. This will allow the church to be undisturbed for all the special Christmas services, when a considerable number of additional visitors come to use St Peter's.

The only aspect, out of our control, which could delay matters is gaining the final approval of the DAC. We believe we have done everything in our power to prepare the ground with our preliminary application but uncertainty will remain until we have their final consent.

## 7 Tiverton and Cullompton Deanery Synod report

The St Peter's representatives, Sally Mundy, Mary Seaton and Richard Stenlake, reported as follows on the last year's activity at Deanery Synod level.

The Tiverton and Cullompton Deanery Synod continues to be a valuable and absorbing forum which unites and encourages members from a wide variety of church communities as they explore the practical ways in which our Christian faith can be deepened and extended within our deanery.

In June, we were introduced to the 'Growing in the Rural Church' programme which is mainly funded by the Church Commissioners. Vivid examples were provided of struggling churches which have been reinvigorated and supported by this programme, and there is capacity to involve more churches.

Our meeting in November was concerned with the Diocese's Common Fund Review Consultation Paper. We were posed with a series of questions, for which the synod was divided into groups. With the aid of our Rector and three financially expert members of St Peter's and St Thomas's Chevithorne, reasoned responses were given by our group to a

number of complex issues. Our deanery input has been collated with that of other deaneries, and final recommendations were made to the March 2019 Diocesan Synod Meeting. Meanwhile, a statement emerged that parishes in interregnum not paying their common fund will only be allocated an incumbent when all their payments have been made and they commit to paying their full amount for the next four years. This ruling left your representatives uneasy, and they will be raising the issue for discussion at the next Deanery Synod in June 2019.

Finally, the synod was privileged to welcome the Right Reverend Jackie Searle, the new Bishop of Crediton, to the meeting in February. Her talk on 'Serving the People of Devon with Joy' was uplifting and strongly appreciated, and was greeted with warm applause.

## 8 Elections

8.1 *Deanery Synod:* Sally Mundy had decided to withdraw after eight years as a representative of St Peter's, and she was thanked for those years of dedicated service. There were no nominations for an immediate replacement. It was noted that in 2020 three representatives would be needed for the following three years in the life of the Synod.

8.2 *PCC:* Kate Henshall, Deborah Lal and Vicki Stuckey were elected to serve on the PCC for the three-year period 2019-2022 in place of Catherine Makepeace, David Ricks and Helen Wakely.

## 9 Appointment of sidespersons

The following were appointed to act as sidespersons for 2019/20, the appointments to be confirmed at the Archdeacon's Visitation: Leslie Boyce, Penny Drysdale, Rod Hilton, Denis and Prissie Holwill, Alan Hopkins, Jean Jenner, Averil Long, Sally Mundy, Jennifer Palmer, Steve Pillinger, Shelia Richardson, Mary Seaton, Brenda and Keith Stocker, Peter and Vicki Stuckey, Rose Tidball, Eric and June Virtue, Tina Ware, Roy Webber, Diane and Keith White, Carole and Mike Youngs, and Mary and William Zarrett.

## 10 Appointment of independent examiner

David Pope proposed, and it was agreed *nem con*, that Apsleys be asked to act as independent examiner for the period to the APCM in 2020.

## 9 Reports

Reports from leaders of St Peter's organisations had been collated, made available online, and received by the meeting. The Rector thanked all members who had undertaken these responsibilities and indeed all who contributed, often quietly and unobtrusively, to the life, the welcoming atmosphere, and the effective working of St Peter's.

## 10 Personalia

Pam Cornwell voiced the gratitude of the whole community of St Peter's for the ministry and leadership, the steady support and personal encouragement, which the Rector continued to give the whole community of St Peter's.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.35 pm.

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After refreshments the Rector introduced the Revd Steph Gordon-Jeffs, who described her work as Team Rector of the Exe Valley Mission Community under the heading 'Rustic Reflections of a Rural Rector'.

Signed:

Date: