

ST PETER'S CHURCH, TIVERTON

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 27 September 2020 at 11.45 am
in St Peter's Church

The Revd Robert Gordon was in the chair, and 36 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 11 April 2019 were approved and signed.

2 Electoral Roll report

Catherine Makepeace (Electoral Roll Officer) reported that a new Electoral Roll had been compiled in March, and there were 114 members, 29 of whom live within the parish and 85 outside it. Because of the postponed APCM, the Roll was reviewed this month but there were no changes.

3 Safeguarding report

Catherine Makepeace (Safeguarding Officer) reported that up until March there had been a good deal of activity around this subject at St Peter's, as safeguarding was given high priority within the Church of England; and the Rector's letter in the parish magazine last year highlighted its importance.

We have been working to ensure that measures are in place for the 'safer recruitment' of people in specific roles within the parish which involve contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults. Based on advice from the Diocese, the necessary documents and protocols have been agreed for Pastoral and Home Communion Visitors as well as for Junior Church and Children's Helpers, and these are now ready for implementation by members of these groups.

Since March, the renewal of safeguarding training and DBS certificates has carried on as normal.

4 Finance

Chris Shields presented his Treasurer's report on the financial situation as of 31 August 2020.

- 4.1 *The Patronal Day 'Give a Little' Fundraiser:* The congregation and friends of St. Peter's have donated generously with just over £8,300 collected by the end of July, including Gift Aid. This is a resounding success and reflects the importance of St. Peter's to us all. That amount allows us to meet the budget for fundraising for the year of £5,500 and to recover some of the income lost due to the closure of the church. The online giving portal will

remain in place as noted on the church website for those still unable to attend services and who are not giving in some other manner, or cheques payable to St. Peter's may still be posted to the church, Attention: Bill Zarrett. (<https://givealittle.co/campaigns/282252db-c039-4998-bd5b-1de53556fc8d>).

- 4.2 *Planned Giving* via PGS is some £1,400 above budget at the end of August, thanks to all those who use this scheme, and also to Helen Wakely who organizes our tax recovery.
- 4.3 *Income*: As a result of the Fundraiser, income through August is only £1,817 below the amount budgeted for that point in the year. It must be noted, however, that the Sunday collections are approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ their normal amount since not all of us are able to attend. As the year proceeds, we will continue to fall behind for this income source. Thus, we note the importance of continued giving.
- 4.4 *Expenses*: These are below budget by approximately £15,000 for the same reason. We have not had the expense of a Parish Administrator or a Director of Music, plus expenditures for Fabric Maintenance and Repair, always the largest items of expense, are £7,000 below budget as work scheduled for the first half of the year could not be completed. As several large projects will commence in the next month or so (e.g. trimming of trees, building of security fencing around the boiler room), much of this 'saving' will soon be spent.
- 4.5 *Investments*: The value of our reserves and investments fell by approximately 20% during the worst of the downturn due to the Covid impact, reflecting the performance of the market in general. As of the end of July, the value of £1,440,929 is only £30,000 below the 2019 year-end figure. Thus, most of the 'Covid loss' has been recovered. This reflects well on the investment management strategies of CCLA, our investment advisors (The CBF Church of England Funds).
- 4.6 *Diocesan Common Fund Contributions*: As directed by the PCC, St Peter's has continued its regular payments to the Diocesan Common Fund of £4,212 per month.

Summary: St. Peter's has not been able to cover its expenses from operating income for years and has relied on investment income to reduce the loss each year. This year, even when including investment income, the budget anticipates a loss of nearly £32,000. The actual loss will likely be somewhat less since our spending for maintaining the fabric of the church will not be completed as planned. Nonetheless, funding for St. Peter's will continue to be an issue for the years to come.

5 Fabric and re-ordering

David Ricks, speaking for the churchwardens and himself as chair of the Fabric Committee, provided reports on developments during the last year, as follows:

- 5.1 *Fabric*: The Quinquennial Inspection of St Peter's in 2018 had stated that the church is generally in good structural condition. There were, however, some items in the report marked as urgent, to be completed within one year, and these have been addressed. The most significant was a group of works on the roof, which included loose pinnacles, pointing to stonework, rendering repairs and refurbishment to the chimney over the vestry. This work (costing £1,750 plus VAT) was undertaken by Western Steeplejacks and completed during September 2020. Additionally, the window in the vestry, which was distorted and leaking, required urgent refurbishment, and this has been put right.

Two unexpected items of expenditure had required action: the installation of guarding for the boiler room, damaged by vandalism (costing £2,800 plus VAT), and the repair of the clock, in which a cotter pin had broken. Impending works were pruning and cutting of trees, for which local authority approval is still awaited, and further repointing at a high level of the east end of the church

Once again we are 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. Our thanks and appreciation, as always, is extended to them.

- 5.2 *Re-ordering*: The tender documents are due to be sent out within two weeks, and after these have been returned in mid-November the PCC will need to take a final decision on the extent and the cost of the works to be commissioned. All being well, the contractors who are keen to make a start, will begin their work from January 2021.

The formal faculty to be issued by the Diocese has taken a long time, in part because of the illness of the Chancellor and also because letters regarding the future of the Newte Library require that a strategy for the preservation of the books stored there be planned and accepted. This matter is being given active consideration, and it is hoped that the faculty may arrive by the end of October.

6 Tiverton and Cullompton Deanery Synod

- 6.1 Mary Seaton and Richard Stenlake reported on the year 2019/20 in the life of the Deanery Synod. The meeting in June 2019 was based on the theme 'Thy Kingdom Come', a global prayer event which invited Christians around the world to pray for the widening of the Church's work. Very imaginative prayer stations had been set up around St Paul's Church, and they helped to focus our prayers for various causes both within our own community and throughout the wider world.
- 6.2 In October, the Synod was introduced to a requirement by the Diocese to put forward a Five Year Deanery Plan by October 2020. This plan would aim to enhance the way the Deanery functions, and to improve communications between the parishes and across the Diocese. A consultation questionnaire was distributed seeking our ideas about how the Deanery might work more effectively. A small St Peter's working group was formed to consider our response, which was subsequently approved by the PCC at the end of January.

In March, the Synod was presented with the resulting draft Deanery Plan, which is quite modest in its scope. Its proposals include the wider sharing of news or initiatives, the holding of two Deanery training events each year, a yearly mission event appealing to a wider group, and a commitment to good communication between mission communities.

In considering our questionnaire response, the St Peter's team soon realised that deep questions were being raised about the way ahead for our own church, and much prayerful deliberation was devoted to the forming of our own Mission Action Plan, which was to have been highlighted at the 2020 APCM.

However, although the parish submissions had been put together with great care and forwarded to the Deanery, and although it had been a useful exercise for all the parishes

and mission communities involved, the long-term significance of the plan had been rendered uncertain by the decision of the Diocese not to use it.

7 Elections

7.1 *Deanery Synod*: Kate Henshall and Mary Seaton were elected to fill two of the three places allocated for St Peter's representatives on the Deanery Synod for the period 2020-23.

7.2 *PCC*: Joanna Hall-Tomkin, Catherine Makepeace, Jennifer Palmer, David Ricks and Richard Stenlake were elected to membership of the PCC for the period 2020-23.

Members of St Peter's recorded their heartfelt thanks to members of the PCC who were retiring: Chris Burford, Helen Fensome and Keith White. A special tribute was paid to David Pope, who had over many years served as treasurer and had steered the church with skill, wit and wisdom in the management of the finances. Rod Hilton had given invaluable service, too, as chair of the finance committee, spending much time and giving unsparing attention to detail in that role.

8 Appointment of sidespersons

The sidespersons for 2019/20 were appointed for 2020/21, the appointments to be confirmed at the Archdeacon's Visitation: Leslie Boyce, Penny Drysdale, Rod Hilton, 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, Tina Ware, Roy Webber, Diane and Keith White, Carole and Mike Youngs, and Mary and William Zarrett.

9 Appointment of independent examiner

Chris Shields proposed, and it was agreed *nem con*, that Apsleys be asked to act as independent examiner for the period to the APCM in 2021.

10 Reports

Reports from leaders of St Peter's organisations had been collated and made available online, and they were 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.

11 Personalia

Mary Seaton voiced the gratitude of the whole community of St Peter's for the leadership which the Rector and the church wardens had provided in the testing times brought about by covid-19. The use of zoom and telephonic resources for the maintenance of regular worship had been greatly appreciated, and the welcome collaboration with St Andrew's and the churches of the Exe Valley mission community had been a source of strength.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.14 pm.

Signed:

Date: