

## ST PETER'S CHURCH, TIVERTON

### Annual Vestry Meeting Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Minutes of the meetings held in church on Sunday 23 April at 12 noon

Gill Heard, churchwarden, acted as chairperson, and 30 members attended.

Apologies were received from Guy Henshall, Jean Jenner, Jenny Park, Janet Rendle, Jo Sanderson and Eric and June Virtue.

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### Annual Vestry Meeting

The meeting opened with prayer.

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28 April 2022 were approved and signed.

2 Election of Churchwardens

Gill Heard and William Zarrett were elected to serve as churchwardens for the coming year.

Their dedicated service during the period of the vacancy was praised by all present, not only for the many responsibilities they had shouldered but also for the spirit of kindness, gentleness and efficiency with which they had acted. They were presented with hampers and tokens as an expression of the heartfelt gratitude felt by the whole St Peter's community. They in turn voiced their gratitude for the spirit of thoughtfulness and collaboration shown by everyone to whom they had looked for help during another year of responsibility.

Signed:

Date:

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### Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 28 April 2022 were approved and signed.

2 Reports

- 2.1 *Churchwardens' report:* Happily, the fabric of the church is in generally sound condition, and this has been a quiet year with no major projects being undertaken apart from reordering. Our main concern this year has been putting the church back together again, following the handing back of the reordered building by the contractor.

The year 2023 is a quinquennial year and our new inspecting architect, Michael Vaughan, will be preparing his report in the middle of the year. Inevitably this report will highlight works to the fabric that will need to be addressed by us over the period of the next five years. We hope that nothing of great magnitude comes to light.

We know that in the coming year we must undertake a number of larger projects, some of which are still in the planning and approval stage. The most significant of these will be works to the rainwater goods [*is that the correct word?*] and repointing on the east face of the south aisle, the introduction of a fire alarm system in the tower to protect the single route of escape from the tower, and the renewal of bird mesh screens to the openings of the bell chamber.

With our reordered church now being used more often than previously for concerts and other events, with larger numbers of occupants, we feel we must take fire escape provision more seriously. Having consulted the Fire Brigade, we will be introducing various measures which they require us to put in place, e.g. better signage and emergency illumination. They also require us to conduct a live fire escape practice at a main service, to make sure the congregation understands the actions they must take.

- 2.2 *Annual report and financial statements of the PCC:* The annual report had been circulated, and the Treasurer reported on the financial outcome for the year 2022. Income had turned out at £1,196 less than budgeted, and expenditure at £10,706 less than budgeted, so the overall result was a loss of £27,012 rather than the budgeted £36,523. Income had held up well, and expenditure particularly on fabric was less than expected as a result of the presence of builders on site for the reordering work.

- 2.3 *Reordering of the church:* Phase One of the reordering is substantially complete. This comprises the removal of pews to the east and west ends, the construction of the extended chancel dais, the new toilet block, new servery and flower arrangers' cupboards and glazing to the porch. Not least, we have moved the font to create a new baptistry in front of the Greenway Chapel, which seems to have found universal favour and acclaim. It is easy to forget just how many changes St Peter's has undergone. They seem to have become familiar and indeed appreciated already.

We are now able to make use of and enjoy these new facilities and are already finding our building is becoming more popular for concerts and other gatherings. At the start, when formulating our plans, we hoped to be able to extend our outreach to the local community, and these aspirations seem to be coming to fruition in a wonderful way.

The one major element of Phase One still to be completed is the children's area and the welcoming facilities to the west of the porch. We hope this will be completed in April.

Due to the revised proposal to accommodate the Newte Library on a mezzanine level above vestry/meeting room, this aspect of the works has been delayed and now forms a Phase Two. We are in the process of obtaining a new Faculty from the Diocese for this work, and we have an acceptable quotation from our contractor. We hope to commence Phase Two in the near future.

The PCC has passed a resolution that the library mezzanine will be named 'The Seaton Gallery'. This is in lasting memory of Mary and in tribute to her family. She was the first to propose the creation of a mezzanine for the books and was a huge support throughout the project.

- 2.4 *Electoral roll report:* Sarah Ware, the electoral roll officer, reported that the number of members of the electoral roll presently stands at 104, which in turn means that the number of representatives of the laity on the PCC may remain at 9.
- 2.5 *Safeguarding:* Joanna Hall-Tomkin, the safeguarding officer, reported that safeguarding not only continues to be an area of high priority within the Church of England but also that here in St Peter's it is a standing item on the agenda of every PCC meeting, and the Parish Policies and Guidelines are reviewed annually by the PCC. All parishes are required to raise awareness of this subject and to ensure that robust policies and practices are in place. The requirements for up to date and regular training are becoming more and more detailed, and the role of the Safeguarding Officer is becoming ever more time-consuming.

The St Peter's 'dashboard' is currently in the process of being updated. An up to date list of training for those undertaking work of a pastoral nature has been distributed recently, and copies are available on the tables at the back of the church. All PCC members need to have an enhanced DBS.

St Peter's has been working to ensure that measures are in place for the 'safer recruitment' of people in specific roles within the parish, paid and voluntary, including those already carrying out the work. These are (i) where an individual has more than incidental contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults who are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect. Examples are pastoral care and Home Communion visitors, Holiday Club helpers, and bell ringers with training responsibilities; and (ii) those in the parish with overall responsibility for safeguarding: the Rector, the PCC and the safeguarding representative. New training is introduced all the time; most recently, training on domestic violence.

- 2.6 *The Tower, and plans for the centenary of the bells and their renewal in 2023-24:* Sheila Scofield reported as follows: We currently have 11 experienced ringers, 2 learners who have just started ringing for service and 2 new recruits. We regularly have 7 or 8 on a Sunday morning and often have 16, with regular visitors on practice nights. Monthly maintenance checks and routine work are carried out on the bells.

The Heritage Open Day tower tours, held in September, continue to attract about 60 visitors. We rang the bells muffled for the passing of the late Queen, open bells for the Proclamation of King Charles III, and muffled bells again for the funeral of the Queen. During the last twelve months we have rung 6 Quarter Peals.

We are currently receiving quotes on the centennial overhaul of the bells, following an inspection and report on the bells by Guild Bell Advisors and Taylor's. The report showed that the bells have been kept in good repair since their recast & rehang in 1923. With costs for the overhaul, the painting of the frame and the replacement of the mesh (to keep birds out) on the louvers, even with volunteer helpers, the total cost is expected to be £25,000. We have already begun fundraising.

- 2.7 *Deanery Synod:* Kate Henshall reported on the coverage of important issues in meetings of the Deanery Synod over the last year. These had included the hosting of three generations of Ukrainians, and the celebrations of the diamond jubilee of Queen Elizabeth; the involvement of Christians in the political life of our country; and how a commitment to 'Simpler, Bolder,

Humbler' might be an appropriate and helpful watchword for the dealings of the church with those within and outside it.

### 3 Election of representatives to the Deanery Synod

Kate Henshall was elected to serve for the years 2023-26.

### 4 Election of lay representatives on the PCC

John Brewster, Joanna Hall-Tomkin, Tom Mitchell and Heather Vincent were elected to serve for the years 2023-26 in the first instance.

### 5 Appointment of sidespeople

The sidespeople appointed for 2023/24 are Leslie Boyce, Penny Drysdale, Kate Henshall, Jean Jenner, Averil Long, Sally Mundy, Jennifer Palmer, Shelia Richardson, Sally Taverner, Heather Vincent and Tina Ware.

The meeting expressed sincere gratitude to them for their much-valued service in this role on the front line of welcoming people as they enter the church.

### 6 Vacancies in essential roles in the life of St Peter's

Members present were alerted to the need to fill two roles that are important in the managing of the finances of the church: (i) a back-up to assist the Treasurer, and (ii) a parish giving recorder.

### 7 Appointment of independent examiner of accounts

The churchwardens proposed and seconded the motion to appoint Apsleys Chartered Accountants as the independent examiner for the period to the APCM in 2024. They were thanked for their services during the past year.

### 8 Any other business

8.1 The *Lighthouse Christian Books and Café* in Bampton Street regularly features in the St Peter's parish magazine, and attention was drawn to the need for every possible support to be given to so worthy a cause.

8.2 The ongoing contribution made by the Tuesday DIY group to the life of our church was highlighted and tributes paid to those who on this way give of their time and skills for the benefit of us all.

8.3 The raising and lowering of the flags, so kindly donated by Jean Jenner in memory of her husband Tony, had long been looked after by Mark Drysdale, to whom our thanks were also due.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.45 pm.

Signed:

Date: