

PARISH OF ST MARY, SHORTLANDS

Minutes of a Meeting of Parishioners and of the 103rd Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary's, Shortlands, held on Sunday, 8th May 2022, in the church following the 10.30 am service and was accessible online to those on the electoral roll

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

The meeting opened with a prayer from Rev Jane Kustner.

Election of Churchwardens

1. The Chair stated that there were two nominations for Church Warden; Kate Buchanan and Marion Westropp were appointed. A round of applause was given in thanks to Sarah Leonard for her four years as Church Warden.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Present: Tim Dawson (*in the Chair*), Robin Hogg (Vice Treasurer), Kate Buchanan and Marion Westropp (*Churchwardens*), Stephanie Maurel (*Secretary*) and parishioners

Minutes of the 102nd Annual Parochial Church Meeting

2. The minutes of the 102nd Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 2nd May 2021, which had been shared online and displayed on the church noticeboard, were taken as read. The minutes were approved and signed. There were no matters arising.

Presentation of the Electoral Roll

3. The Electoral Roll was presented. There were 5 new additions to the electoral roll in 2021 and 5 losses and the total number of the electoral roll stayed at 171. 90 of these reside within the parish and 81 outside.

Election of PCC members

4. 3 individuals who were nominated, seconded and who wished to stand for PCC membership were presented, their CV having been on display at the back of the church. David Jefferys, Robin Hogg and Pauline Lambourne were duly elected. The congregation offered a round of applause at their election.

Election of Deanery Synod Reps

5. Ann-Marie Jefferys, Jan Boam and Glo Sherman were confirmed as Deanery Synod Reps for the third year in their term.

Examined Accounts

6. The ViceTreasurer spoke to the Financial Report. The copies of the full Charity Commission accounts were available for inspection online and at the back of the church.

7. Attention was drawn to the restricted funds which is the money put aside for the Future Generations and the Quinquennial work needed on the church and Hall.

8. The Net Gain on Investments is c. £24k and the positive balance is representative of the increase in value of the stock market investment. This positive performance has kept the Church accounts in the black and without this there would have been a shortfall of £7k at the end of the year.

9. The end of year position of the funds of the church is £420k, this is broken down by £85k of unrestricted general funds, £160k of development funds, £106k of Church Repair Fund and £68k of Hall Repair Fund.
10. In response to a question, it was confirmed that the PCC would be discussing the return of the collection plate at the next PCC meeting.
11. Our Parish Share is a formula based on our income and the number of people on our electoral roll.
12. The Report and Accounts for 2021 were signed off.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

13. The accounts are reviewed by Graham Smedley, and he was appointed as the Independent Examiner for 2022.

Report on the Fabric and Ornaments

14. The Chair referred to the Fabric and Ornaments report that was not available online. The report will be put on the website and at the back of church within the week. The outstanding job done by Graham Smedley in this report was noted by the Chair.
15. Agreement was given to sign the report off.

Deanery Synod

16. Stephanie Maurel read the Deanery Synod Report written by Ann-Marie Jefferys.
17. Deanery Synod has met twice in 2021 and the main topic at the April meeting was Living in Love and Faith. St Mary's has a year to engage with this and there are planned study days. Feedback will be given to General Synod in summer 2022.
18. At the November meeting the focus was Called Together and the links to the five marks of mission.
19. In 2022, the Synod will revert to meeting three times a year. Members of the Diocesan Synod were announced. Ann-Marie Jefferys was re-elected and Glo Sherman was elected to the Deanery Synod Standing Committee.

Safeguarding

20. Kay Coleman presented the safeguarding report.
21. The safeguarding training has been revised with modules updated and modules accessed online. Training needs to be updated every three years and PCC members and Wardens have been reminded to ensure that all have the relevant level of training. Kay Coleman has attended several meetings this year with the Diocese and has kept her training up to date including training focused on Domestic Violence.
22. Safeguarding courses are open to everyone in the church and the courses were recommended to all.
23. Kay Coleman asked any safeguarding referrals to go to her and that she was always available to support and to speak to people.
24. Sunday 20th November will be safeguarding Sunday to raise awareness of safeguarding and to highlight all that is being done to create a safe environment.
25. Significant reforms have been proposed on Safeguarding, especially linked to the checking and challenging of processes, and is being taken to General Synod.

Annual Report 2021

26. The Chair presented the highlights of the Annual Report that has been shared online and was available at the back of church.
27. It was noted that Rev Gary Best was taking up a new role and that there was a coach to take parishioners to his installation. St Mary's is going through a process of recruiting a new incumbent although this could take 18 months. In the meantime, the church is looking to appoint an interim Priest-in-Charge.

- 28. Junior Church is a great success – Rachel Tillotson, the Junior Church leader – was applauded for her work. There is now Teatime Together once a month on a Sunday afternoon. A Youth Club is also starting on a Sunday evening.
- 29. Thanks were given to all those who helped during lockdown, running morning prayer especially.
- 30. The hall and the church are due for a quinquennial review which is overdue because of the pandemic. The review will take place this year and a programme of the work required for the next five years will be drawn up.
- 31. There were no questions on the report, and it was accepted and approved.

AOB

- 32. Robin Hogg presented on the Future Generations Project and reminded people that the plans for the reordering of the church have been agreed. The detail has now been worked on to get this approved for Faculty. This year will be the push on fundraising to go ahead, it was estimated that 60% of the funding had been raised to date.
- 33. Kate Buchanan presented an update on the interregnum and a resume of the journey to this point. Rev Gary Best had stepped back as his marriage had broken down in the autumn 2021. The Diocese found a house in Chatham for Lynn Best and the children. Rev Jane Kustner stepped in and led services at St Mary’s. Rev Best is now priest in charge in a parish in Suffolk and St Mary’s is in an interregnum since the 7th of May. Official thanks were given for the support of Rev Jane Kustner over the past 6 months and for all the areas that she has supported with.
- 34. The diocese propose an interim priest attached to St Marys for the period of the interregnum. The PCC accepted that this role could be done by Rev Jane Kustner, and that she would be able to give leadership to prepare for the next longer-term incumbent. There are legal procedures to follow to allow an interim priest in charge which are being followed once the process has been completed.
- 35. Bishop Simon has stated that he would like Rev Jane Kustner take on the interim role at St Marys and that the formal process should be followed. This is now proceeding. The remuneration will be a normal stipend and Rev Jane Kustner will move into the vicarage.
- 36. The appointment of an interim priest will not slow down the appointment process for a full-time vicar and this is also being worked on in parallel. It is hoped that as many people as possible will be able to feed into this process from the congregation.
- 37. There were no questions for Kate Buchanan on this.
- 38. Thanks were given to the PCC Secretary who was standing down at this meeting.
- 39. Applause was given by those present for the PCC and those who have been supporting the church since the sabbatical taken by Rev Gary Best.

The meeting closed with the Grace.

Date

Chair