

Parochial Church Council

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting at St John Baptist Parish Church held as a Zoom meeting on Tuesday, 24th November 2020.

OPENING

Canon Alistair reminded everyone that this meeting was for those on the Electoral Roll.

PRESENT

B& J Townsend, J Dempsey, A&J Titterington, V Thornley, C&M Couper, K&L Finlayson, M Waller, B&M Taylor, J Hitchcock, K&RevP Taylor, C McAteer, P Ward, D&L Millbank, B Lowe, M. Anson, G&S McBride, D&P Brand, B Hurley, A-L Robson, M&J Hill, R Edney, C Buckley, S Cherry, J Catterall, C Bell +2 unidentified.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies: Tracey Eves and Kath Morris

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4th APRIL 2019

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 4th April 2019 have been circulated and were approved unanimously.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. SIGNING OF THE TERRIER

Canon Alistair had received the Terrier from Barry and thanked him for it. He was going to sign it and get it back to Barry as soon as possible.

Prior to the treasurer's report, Canon Alistair brought some questions he had received to the attention of the meeting. One from Susan Ainsworth, *During 2019 Parishioners were told that the Diocese agreed to suspend of Annual Parish Share payment of around £110,000- this suspension of payments will, no doubt be reflected in the December 2019 accounts. Could PCC please provide parishioners with the details of the agreement with the Diocese, specifically.*

- a) *Why has the Diocese agreed to this measure?*
- b) *How long does the agreement last for?*
- c) *Is it a 'waiver' or a deferral of our payments?*
- d) *Are there any conditions attaching to the agreement?*
- e) *What would happen if we were unable to recommence payment of our Parish Share at the end of the agreement period?*

Questions from Clifford Bell. *The majority of Parish 'liquid reserves' are held within the Brown and Shipley investment. No doubt the December 2019 financial year end value of that investment will be reported within the accounts. Given the stock volatility experienced in 2020 what is the current value of that Brown and Shipley investment?*

Canon Alistair said he would leave that to the treasurer if he wished to answer in his report.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT – Jim Titterington

This report covers 2019. Under normal circumstances the meeting would have been held in the Spring. At next year's APCM I will report on 2020.

First, and foremost, thanks to the regular givers within the Parish, income in 2019 was similar to that of 2018. Rental income from St. Martin's House was affected by maintenance and improvement works required including a new boiler. Rental income from the Parish Hall ceased at the end of September 2019 as it did for St Martin's House when it was converted into a cheerful and well-used temporary office and meeting space. Parish Hall equipment and valuables are also stored there.

In view of the loss of income and in preparation for the building programme, a meeting was held with Diocesan finance representatives in November 2019 led by Fr. Shaun. It was an informal meeting and involved a detailed explanation of the parish finances, including day-to-day expenses and projections. The Parish Share is a voluntary contribution towards the work of the Church in the Diocese. Historically Broughton has always paid its contribution in full. As it is a voluntary contribution it is not shown as a liability in the Annual Accounts and there is no written agreement between the PCC and the Diocese with regard to payment. The Diocese acknowledged the need to pay professional fees as well as capital costs for the new St. Martin's. They also understood the impact of the loss of income from the Parish Hall, St. Martin's House and St. Martin's Chapel's weekly giving. In full support of the plans for the new Parish Hall, the Diocese agreed that the payment of the Parish Share should be suspended for the remainder of 2019 and the whole of 2020. This is support with a value of £150,000. At the November 2019 meeting we were offered the opportunity to apply for a grant from the Diocesan Vision fund. Although an application was submitted this fund was subsequently withdrawn due to the impact of COVID 19. A parishioner has expressed concern about the effects of COVID 19 on the Brown Shipley investment. I am able to report that owing to the volatile conditions the PCC made the decision to move the £240,000 legacies reserved for mission to the relative safety of the PCC's deposit account, thereby safeguarding the funds for the new build. A fuller report showing movement between accounts will be presented at the APCM in 2021.

In closing the report may I express grateful thanks to Mrs. Nancy Milne and her group for donations towards the replacement of exterior lighting equipment at St. John's. The parish is supported by people who understand the daily requirements of sustaining the worship of God in this place as well as the vision for its future. Without financial support as well as prayer and the dedicated work of volunteers, the parish cannot function.

There were no questions asked but Canon Alistair thanked the treasurer for all his time and hard work in that role.

6. SECRETARY'S WRITTEN REPORT – Marilyn Couper

2019 was a difficult year for Broughton Parish. We are particularly grateful to Barry Townsend as the single churchwarden for all his hard work, who together with the Ministry team have arranged and maintained services at the worship centres.

In 2019 the Standing Committee of the PCC, consisting this year mainly of one Churchwarden, PCC Treasurer and PCC Secretary, met on six occasions. The PCC met for 6 scheduled meetings, to carry out PCC business. The attendance at meetings has averaged just short of 77% during the year. The sub committees are Standing, Social, Communications, Land & Buildings with Parish Hall Management, Finance They report to the full PCC with their observations and any recommendations. Following discussions, decisions are reached. This year there were also to be the focussed groups of the Parish Review.

The January meeting was the first one after the PCC had unanimously accepted REGENDA as the partner to redevelop the Parish Hall Complex. Fr Shaun reminded the PCC of the Mission Statement to make Jesus known through prayers and teaching and to do this we need a base for the Parish. The Parish Hall was once a Chapel with a parish hall and now it has

become a community centre with a chapel. It needs to be a building to serve the parish community first and then the wider community. Fr Shaun reminded the meeting that we needed to look at the Parish Review and have follow-up meetings with people who said they would volunteer. He felt that the Mission Action Plan needed more structure.

It was at the meeting in March, chaired by Barry Townsend that he informed us that Fr Shaun had been signed off sick for at least 2 months. This is the meeting at which the Treasurer presented the 2018 accounts for approval by the PCC. He answered a variety of questions, particularly about the Parish Share, and the use of our reserves towards the St. Martin's Chapel and Parish hall proposals

Rev. Rie and Rachael Ainsworth who is our Safeguarding Officer have been looking into the Safeguarding Training provided by the Diocese to book at suitable dates for the PCC to attend. We discussed the need for Parish organisations to provide detailed Risk Assessments, in particular for off-site visits, as these need to be signed off by the PCC.

Rachael Ainsworth reported that she had communicated with the 3 Jigsaw groups regarding the choosing of a Rose Queen and her attendants for 2019. Communication with the groups had not been easy this year and there had been little response regarding children of the appropriate age. It was discussed and the decision was to postpone the event least for this year. The clergy will arrange a service to acknowledge the end of the current Rose Queen's year. There was a feeling that we need an item on a future agenda for Children's Ministry.

It was at this meeting that Barry Townsend explained that in Fr Shaun's absence, Archdeacon Michael has offered to chair the APCM but he was not available for Monday, April 1st. The PCC agreed to his offered date of Thursday, 4th April in the Parish Church. The PCC also confirmed that the 'PCC should go ahead with the Planning application to redevelop St. Martin's Complex and to obtain grants as previously agreed at the PCC meeting on 19th January 2019. The vote was 10 in favour, 1 against and 4 abstentions.

As is tradition, the May meeting, which is the first after the APCM, Barry Townsend welcomed everyone, particularly the new members who this year were Dave Brand, Carol Buckley, Richard Edney, Chris Kerry, Carol Pettinger and our new churchwarden Sam Walmsley. Barry reminded all members that we were here to represent the whole parish. He also told us that Fr Shaun would be absent until June 30th at the earliest with a phased return. We need to discuss the services we can make available. Since Easter we have had no help from the Diocese in providing services, particularly Eucharist. Our Ministry Team has populated a rota of services providing a Eucharist somewhere in the parish, as well as St. Margaret's each Sunday with help from retired clergy. We are going to need lay help as Rev Rie is now only available for 1 service a week. As parishioners we need to appreciate the changes of services.

All Parish Policies are reviewed at the May meeting and all PCC members had had the opportunity to read them and submit any alterations or amendments. The policies were all adopted with the necessary amendments. The Standing Committee of the PCC had been asked to consider a Transparency Policy which will be presented at the next meeting in July. The Options Appraisal Group reported on the progress with the St Martin's redevelopment project and each member had a handout.

The July meeting was held at St. Peter's School as this was the one at which the Head Teachers of both our Primary schools presented an overview of the schools over the past 12 months. This included events in the schools and the effects of any government changes to the curriculum. The PCC had the opportunity to ask any questions and to thank them and ask them to pass on our thanks to the staff.

During the rest of the meeting, the PCC was presented with the Social Media Community Guidelines to accept. They are proposed for the PCC and those who use social media to promote the parish. The PCC agreed it should be regarded as good practice, although it isn't really enforceable.

It was at this meeting, after much discussion, the PCC voted 14 votes for and 1 against a proposal for the Parish Hall to close to ALL commercial lettings (including the Club) on 30th September when the Electrical Wiring Safety Inspection ran out.

Unfortunately, at the September meeting, again chaired by Barry Townsend, we received 2 letters of resignation, one from Rachael Ainsworth as Safeguarding Officer as from 31st October and Sam Walmsley as churchwarden with immediate effect. Sam realised the impracticality of the role as he began university at Durham. We thanked them both for all they have done.

There was some consideration of amendments to the wording of the Confidentiality and Transparency Policy to which the PCC agreed.

The Safeguarding Officer was concerned that not all those required to complete safeguarding training through the Diocese had completed the training or booked on a course. These would be completed in the next few months. Rachael was thanked for her report and all she had done as Safeguarding Officer.

In November, the PCC was pleased to welcome Fr Shaun back to his first meeting since January. He thanked the PCC for its support during his absence. However, he expressed his disappointment that the three individual worship centres show little interest outside their own centre. We need to start implementing Vision 2026 and make mission important by planning and looking forward. The Parish Survey brought great ideas but we need offers of help. There has been a good deal of criticism regarding the Parish Hall Project but it will focus on the new Parish centre for parish life, with the added bonus of community use. We are still awaiting planning consent, and the costings to pass onto the PCC as soon as possible, for their final approval.

The PCC is fully aware of all the excellent work that is being done in the Parish to encourage young families. JIGSAW and MESSY CHURCH could not continue without the hard work of their leaders. There is always room for more people to help and to increase the numbers of children. Little Fishes continues to meet each Wednesday afternoon during term time for pre school children and their carers.

The annual reports sent from committees and organisations in the Parish are contained in the paperwork available for tonight and show how much hard work is put in by so many volunteers in all the wide range of activities. The report from the Deanery Synod, which has four representatives from our parish, is included in the paperwork.

Thank you to Vicki Thornley, our amazing Parish Administrator for all her hard work in 2019 and for collating all the paperwork for this meeting.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the smooth running of the PCC and the Parish in 2019. There were no questions asked about this report.

7. ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER'S WRITTEN REPORT – Peter Ward

The total number of people on the Electoral Roll is 296.

This consists of 100 Non Residents, i.e People who do not live within the Parish, and 196 who are Residents of the Parish. The Roll last year stood at 291.

Can I also ask that if anyone has knowledge of any changes to the roll can they please let me know. A copy of the Roll is held at the Worship Centres.

8. DEANERY SYNOD WRITTEN REPORT- Andrea Titterington

Canon Alistair commented that this was a very comprehensive and detailed report from Andrea.

The Preston Deanery Synod met three times during 2019. Between Synods the Deanery Synod Standing Committee meets to plan an Agenda that is relevant to all parishes. Fr. Shaun, stepped down as Area Dean and Chairman of the Synod and Bishop Julian licensed Revd Canon Alistair McHaffie (Preston St. Matthew's) on 7th October 2019 at Preston Minster.

Deanery Synod Meeting at St Stephen's, Broadgate on Monday 28th Jan 2019

Bishop Jill gave the address calling on Preston Deanery to **STAND UP:**

Stand up in calling - What has God really called us to do? It's such a privilege being Bishop of Lancaster, finding buried treasure everywhere, as see the work of the parishes! Drawn to prayer, why? **Matthew 9:36** - "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them". People are desperately hungry for the Gospel; they are increasingly looking for guidance; they are praying for miracles, particularly younger people. The Gospel – 'Disney' is selling it, shows the hunger. **Luke 15:20** - "... his father saw him and had compassion". God hasn't lost us, God's heart is filled with compassion. God is longing for his people to come home. Misses you!! Also see **Matthew 12:10**

Stand up together – when a church stands up in Mission, one side effect is that fortunate things are likely to happen. There will be many opportunities through the planned Preston Resource Church, note **Mark 3:24** "If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand". Let's stand up together. Two key aspects of Congregation Planting and Church Planting – pray a lot and have massive courage! If Jesus saw a crowd his heart was filled with compassion but in the West, we're a bit insular. Church of England is "A Christian Presence in Every Community" – where you are - who/where are the people of peace? What's happening on the ground in your parish? [Bishop Jill would love to see attendance at church becoming the 'normal' again.] With deep Roots there is hope for a tree. Even if it's cut down it may grow again. (**Job 14:7**) Deep roots are not touched by the frost. See "All that is Gold does Not Glitter" - a poem written by J. R. R. Tolkien. Seek out what words were spoken over your church in its early days; to grow - go back to your church's roots.

Stand up on the shoulders of giants – People must hear the Gospel in 'their own language.' On the day of Pentecost the Spirit came and people heard in their own language. Who are missing from your congregation? Pray, find people of peace in their own language. [Bishop Jill has been praying a lot for our country recently.]

"You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains. You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas.

I am strong, when I am on your shoulders. You raise me up, to more than I can be"

God will raise us up to stand on the shoulders of giants, call to prayer. **The battle is now: Preston to Stand Up. Preston to be a Power House.** It's a lie to say that this is how it is - we can see change, through prayer and action. Jesus taught his disciples to pray. **If prayer is not your thing – pray!** When we pray for a long time our prayers become more ambitious!! (NOTE: Preston City Ecumenical prayer meeting now each Tuesday, 7.30am to 8.30am at Crossgate Church).

Bishop Jill's address was followed by contributions from parishes on how they are reaching out to their communities: food banks, work clubs, cross-cultural activities, as well as the challenges.

Notice was given of the Deanery's Primary Visitation at St. Cuthbert's, Lytham on 21st May; the 2019 Ecumenical Lent Series at Central Methodist Church; and the closure of the Minster for refurbishment.

Deanery Synod Meeting at St. Matthew's on 19th June 2019

David Barlow, Chair, Diocesan Board of Finance, was the speaker. He had been in post for a year, is also Treasurer at St John's Whittle-le-Woods; a Reader there since 1992. David's wife is Treasurer of the Diocesan Mother's Union and he often attends events with her around the diocese. He said that as he never really understood the Diocese, he was finding it fascinating as he became more involved. He answered questions from parish representatives: **Q.** Giving – it takes time for new people coming to church to come on board in terms of giving – the Parish Share should recognise a ceiling, not expect parishes to continue to give more.

David: the bulk of the Parish Share goes to pay clergy but it's a real challenge. Unless a diocese has great hidden assets, each financial year has to balance. There's great disparity in giving across the Diocese, some parishes average £16-£20 per regular giver per week; others

in similar socio-economic area only average £5. The solution isn't people like me going round to parishes; it's each person accepting their responsibility. At present the Diocese is working through the 2020, budget but also looking at 2021 & 2022. The main challenge is maintaining clergy numbers at that of 5 or 6yrs ago. They could possibly dip into Diocesan reserves, but that would only last 2 or 3 yrs, then what? David is from a parish that just about pays its parish share, but giving is not an issue which can be solved from the centre.

Q. It is interesting that the Diocese doesn't want to use up all its reserves, but expects each church to do so!

Stephanie Rankin, Lay Chair: most of the diocesan reserves are in the vicarages, can't just sell them off!

David: a large amount is in property, but there is some flexibility. The Diocese is acutely conscious of challenges facing parishes. One issue is that people seem to think that the Church of England is rich, it doesn't need the money. Vicars face the challenge of balancing preaching about giving without the perception that that's all we're interested in! What is needed is balanced discipleship.

Q. One person's £1-£2 is equivalent to another giving £20, so need those who can, to over-give to balance.

David: I entirely agree. The diocese sees it as "we're in this together." However, in some relatively rich parishes the giving only averages £5/week. [Personally he gave £5, 35 years ago!] Parish Share does try to balance it out.

Q. There's been many new houses built in Grimsargh parish recently. People come to church for many reasons, including parents who come to get children into Archbishop Temple School. **David:** It seems that there's not enough capacity at ATS, will chat with Stephen (Education) about it.

Q. Thinking beyond next year, it takes time to turn things round and most generous givers are dying off or moving to be nearer family. We have increased the number of givers, but new ones enter at a lower level and often such families have restricted disposable income. It is coming down to our church wondering if we can pay all our bills.

David: Clearly there's a "lag in giving" when new families come into church. In a financial sense it's in the right direction, but ultimately their giving will take time. In the wider sense the growth of churches is a matter of faith. At every opportunity Bishop Philip reminds the Diocesan Committees of their opportunities. There is a lower income Diocesan Fund which comes from central CofE, based on levels of deprivation, this year it was £1.3M.

Comment: Level of giving in Lincoln Diocese is the lowest in the country, it should be about the middle. People there assume that it has enough historical funds, so why should they give! The result is that the Diocese is in a seriously negative position financially, having to always use reserves.

Q. The Diocesan policy of buying houses for clergy needs to be reviewed. Locally the diocese paid top price for a house recently which had been on the market for 2 yrs.

David: The Diocese takes professional advice. David is looking at this as part of the budget process. The cost of running the Blackburn Diocese is well within the range for a charity of its size.

Q. Broughton has a parish share of £106,818 this year. It a big ask and it's difficult to communicate to the parish why it's so large. On the matter of asset management, the Diocese should have a serious look at its policies, including maintenance and energy efficiency of its stock. Nothing has changed, although there was a review in the 1990s of clergy housing. The Diocese continues to buy/sell houses for curates, paying unrealistic prices. More thought should be given to renting.

David: I will look into this, 2nd highest capital cost is our assets, will take this back and look at renting.

Following up on another issue the **Preston Resource Church** funding (£1.5m) is underwritten by the Diocese. It's good to see the new Vicar here tonight and we look forward to meeting him and seeing the project develop.

Q. The church of the Lord will grow in Preston, money invested is to bring people into the kingdom, we should not look in a narrow way.

David: I'm not paid for this job. One of my aims is to make Diocesan financial information clearer; to find ways that it can be understood so that when a group reads a financial statement it is understandable. The message is that finance is a means to an end. We should be good stewards but it may come to a point where you've a gap – it's called faith. From David's work with charities they improve giving by seeking:

1. One off donations, 2. Encouraging regular support that can lead to 3. 'Heros' – to feel part of it. Why give? – people see something that they feel their giving will help. In churches we want to give something back to God for what he has given to us.

Q. The Diocese has advice on credit card readers, is there anything on on-line giving, etc.?

Stephanie: Refer to the Diocesan web-site – in the "About us" section, find "Donate" on the RHS and read through.

David: Young people now do everything through their phones, for one-off appeals this is very good. The challenge is (as above) to move this to giving regularly. David has been in the job 12 months, he's taking the time to understand it and to feel the history of the church. He'd like to come back to talk to Synod in about 18 months' time and see how the conversation has moved on.

David invited feedback or follow up queries, please email him on:

davidlesbarlow@outlook.com.

Notice was given of the Blackburn Cathedral Service in Thanksgiving for Archdeacon Michael Everitt's ministry in the Diocese on 13th July 2019.

Deanery Synod Meeting at Preston Minster on 7th October 2019.

Synod was preceded by Bishop Julian licensing Revd Canon Alistair McHaffie as Area Dean of Preston. Bishop Julian announced that The Venerable David Picken, currently Archdeacon of Newark in the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, has had been appointed the new Archdeacon of Lancaster. Canon Alistair welcomed all to Synod and spoke about his aim to make Synod and Chapter meetings worthwhile for all. He is one of the least longest serving clergy of the Deanery! He gave thanks to Fr. Shaun Baldwin as Area Dean and asked all to continue to pray for Shaun as he eases back into Ministry. He is looking for the Deanery to continue to be supportive of each other and faithful in sharing the Gospel; and for Synod to feed things of concern to the Diocese and perhaps eventually to the national church.

Revd Sam Haigh, the main speaker, stated that he had been Vicar of Preston since April, the Minster and St George's, in short the City Centre. Initially met with Ron (Crossgate), Nathan (All Saints) and Alistair, have since met with many other clergy too. What is a Resourcing Parish? The Vision, Aims and Goals come from the heart of the early church where Paul went round strategic cities planting churches. Sam sees it as God's idea before anyone else!

Sam has come from HTB (Holy Trinity, Brompton), which since the 80s has sought outreach, to plant churches in areas where churches have often dwindled and closed. After doing so in parts of London, Brighton was next and has given a very successful lead. Resource Churches in other cities have followed e.g. Bournemouth, Gateshead & Lincoln. In Blackburn Diocese there are 2 churches with over 200 in the congregation each week: St Andrew's, Leyland and St Thomas', Lancaster. The Minster and St George's had reached 46 per week average. Fr Timothy's ministry had been fantastic; especially with links to civic life in Preston, building key relationships with City and County Hall.

Sam's initial visits to Preston were 2 yrs ago. He was impressed with regeneration taking place and optimism of the people. It was different to what he'd expected and what he'd experienced elsewhere. The regeneration comes alongside vast social need/deprivation in the city. He's

encouraged to find that one of the early vicars at the Minster was here for 20+ years and planted 5 churches, of which St Andrew's continues.

The re-launch of the Minster on 29th September saw 300 people here for the Sunday Service and 8 confetti cannons used! (Many came to support the initial service). Yesterday at 11am, 100 people came here, great! He emphasized that the Minster is NOT here to steal Christians from other Churches. Transfers are a waste of time. The Minster is targeting those who don't presently go to Church. Their first challenge is the Alpha Course 9th October. A bunch of Christians (about 20 in total) have come with Sam, with the blessing of their churches, to be the core - themselves to reach out to plant other churches in Preston. Already strong links with UCLan, there for fresher's week and have linked with the UCLan Christian Union.

What is a Resourcing Church? A growing, thriving ministry. Teaching the Bible and rhythms of prayer. If we are to help you, we first need to grow. Looking to plant into urban estates, but such a church couldn't initially support itself financially. The Minster will be the hub, a place of expertise: Youth Ministry training? Worship? Children's work? See how it develops over the years.

The bid from the Diocese: stated that there should be a congregation of 400 by 2023.

The parish model of Evangelical and Anglo/Catholic tradition churches is unique. The CofE is looking for church plants to be in both traditions. The budget includes a pipeline of curates who will come here to move on to plant churches, constantly giving away people/resources. God's teaching in 2 Cor. 8, as we give away we also receive. Church planting will be where no church at present and with

strong links with student population. HTB aims: 1. Iconic Building, 2. In city centre, 3. Near university – the Minster ticks all three. Most people come to faith when younger than 25 yrs old. There's a key window of time when people are seeking to understand God/life/universe. Sam introduced other members of the team: Tim, Jason [David couldn't be here this eve] and Neville, the operations manager. Sam asked for prayers for the Resource Church and its aims and for their parish relationship between the Minster and St. George's to be an example to the wider church of how vastly different traditions can flourish together.

There were no follow up questions.

Canon Alistair made reference to a suite of documents of reports from sub committees and organisations. Please see Appendix at the end of the Minutes. No comments or questions were received about these.

9. ELECTION OF DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES

Broughton Parish is entitled to 4 representatives to serve on the Preston Deanery Synod. They are elected to serve for 3 years. The following were duly elected by the meeting

1. Susan Cherry
2. Marilyn Couper
3. Tracey Eves
4. Andrea Titterington

Canon Alistair thanked the

four for volunteering to serve in that role. As Area Dean he is aware that Deanery Synods are often described as a group of people waiting to go home! He promised that he would try to make them more interesting. Deanery level in the church is often difficult to fill and yet it has quite an important part to play.

10. ELECTION OF PCC MEMBERS

Canon Alistair explained that there were 5 places available on the PCC for the next 3 years and, following a resignation 1 place for 2 years. As there were 6 nominations, he had numbered them in alphabetical order and intended to roll a dice and the number rolled would be the place for 2 years. The following were duly elected for the years indicated

- | | |
|----------------------|------|
| 1. Dave Brand | 3yrs |
| 2. Patricia Brand | 3yrs |
| 3. James Gibson | 3yrs |
| 4. Brendan Hurley | 3yrs |
| 5. Ann Louise Robson | 3yrs |
| 6. Peter Ward | 2yrs |

11. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

The treasurer proposed that Simon Worswick of R.P.Smith & Co be appointed as our Independent Examiner. This was seconded by Brendan Hurley and it was agreed unanimously.

12. CURATE'S REPORT – Rev. Pauline Taylor

This is a report from January 2020 to date.

Well this has been quite an unusual year, to say the least, with Father Shaun taking his last service on the 16th February. We went forward with all our plans which we had in place. We began confirmation classes on the 27th February and we went into Lent at the beginning of March when our Lent groups began. We also planned Messy Church and Baptism prep. Evenings. But lockdown was announced on the 23rd March. Easter began at the beginning of April and also took my first funeral service; which Keith filmed at home and was played on screen at the Crematorium my first virtual service. During lockdown we began to prepare service sheets, prayer sheets and reflections which were distributed on line or by post. During lockdown Rev. Rie took two parishioners funerals for me as I was still having chemo. Also, during lock-down the pastoral team were in touch with parishioners by phone and the ICU nurses in hospital would take the phone to the patient and allow me to speak and to pray with them. This was a ministry which I found very humbling for all involved. Throughout the year we have had many weddings and baptisms cancelled, re-arranged only to be cancelled again; hopefully next year we will be able to hold these services. I did take a wedding on the 21st August which had small numbers attending but everybody agreed that it was very personal. I also took a baptism on the 23rd August with small numbers again.

I have taken many funerals at the crem. and also, at Church with small congregations. Pastoral care for these services both before and after the service has been done in as sensitive a manner as possible during lock-down. I was also able to take two All-Souls services at the end of October to help with pastoral care.

Once Church reopened after the 1st lock-down private prayer was possible two mornings a week. When morning services resumed Andrea and I with the two Michael's took the services. We were able to have our first Communion when Rev. John Ball officiated just before the 2nd lock-down was announced.

Throughout this time there have been many people working in the forefront and background of Church, who we could not have managed without. To me this is being a witness to God at work in our community. May I thank each one of you for your time and I would also like to thank my husband Keith for his support.

Could I ask everybody to pray and listen to God's calling for you, to use your gifts both great and small in this Parish. I would love you to get in touch with us via phone or email so that we can go forward in unity to share God's word and do God's will in this community.

Canon Alistair thanked Rev. Pauline on behalf of the whole Parish for what must have been a difficult year.

13. ELECTION OF SIDESPERSONS

Covid 19 pandemic has meant that the services in the Parish Church have had to be restricted due to Government regulations. Rotas have therefore had to be suspended temporarily. The new register and rotas for Deputy wardens and sidespersons is in progress. When complete it will be issued to all Deputy wardens and Sidespersons. We are hopeful that services will

return to normal sometime next year. As the government allows, services are gradually returning to St. John's, with St. Peter's hopefully holding a short service on December 13th led by Rev. Pauline. Barry Townsend thanked those who have helped over the past 18 months and particularly during the period of the Covid pandemic. He hoped they could be counted on to help in the future. He thanked Nancy Milne, who has stepped down as Sacristan at the Parish Church for all she has done behind the scenes for many years and we wish her well. A huge thank you to Rev. Pauline and Canon Andrea for all their hard work and help during the Interregnum, and to other clergy who have come to help with services. Thanks also to Canon Alistair for chairing our meetings and being on hand with help and advice.

Barry reported that at the moment we have 42 Sidespersons who have agreed to remain in the role but the list is not complete.

QUESTIONS SENT TO CANON ALISTAIR PRIOR TO THE APCM

These questions were as follows

From Susan Ainsworth – There is a great deal of Parishioner interest in this project (St. Martin's/Parish Hall) and it would help avoid rumours and speculation if details had been shared. The Options Review Group have been working on this project during the last two years and they have put in a tremendous amount of work into it. There have been brief updates via the Parish news sheets, but no actual meeting minutes have been made available to parishioners, neither has any minutes been provided on those discussions that have taken place within PCC meetings.

a) *If meetings have taken place would PCC please now make all relevant minutes available to parishioners (both historic and future)?*

b) *Could the PCC explain why these had been withheld from the Parishioners?*

Canon Alistair, dealing with the questions from Susan Ainsworth said that it is the PCC's decisions about what is confidential while the negotiations are ongoing for the St. Martin's Project. Non confidential information has been released in the various Parish media outlets.

From Clifford Bell – The PCC was unanimous in its support for this Proposal back in September 2018 – in the light of the delays and mounting costs – does that still remain the case?

Can I request that the answers are published, via the Parish news sheet within a month of the meeting.

In response to Clifford Bell's first question, Canon Alistair read out the details of the PCC voting since the commencement of the Project as follows:-

October 2018 Decision to go forward with the rebuild option - 15 for and 1 abstention.

March 2019 Decision to go ahead with the Planning Application and to obtain grants asap. 10 for, 1 against and 4 abstentions.

July 2019 Decision to close the Parish Hall Complex (for H&S reasons) to all commercial users including the Church Club 14 for and 2 against.

March 2020 Decision to approve audited accounts 15 for, 2 against and 2 abstentions.

Decision to sell part of the land, sign a building contract, launch an appeal for donations, and apply to Charities etc for grants 12 for, 4 against and 3 abstentions.

June 2020 Decision to remove asbestos, (by email) 13 for, 5 against and 2 abstentions.

November 2020 Decision to demolish, sell 25 Northway and enter into agreement to allow PCC to use as an office during building works. 11 for and 4 against.

Susan Cherry said that some of those numbers she didn't recall were exactly right but she still maintain that we supported the project as an exploratory project about 2 years ago and we have not yet as a PCC actually voted completely on the project. We've had a drip feed of "We need to do this and we need to do that". As she see it we may never vote properly as we should as a PCC on whether we should go ahead with the project or not. The PCC secretary stated that those voting figures were the exact figures taken from the Minutes. Canon Alistair suggested that the subject be brought to the next PCC Meeting. Susan Cherry stated that she had done that relentlessly. "I did a document on the Charity Commission and some of the personal liability issues potentially, which I don't think has been circulated to the

whole of the PCC. I feel as though I am wasting my time personally. Because you have to take financial matters seriously. I am a spiritual person but you have to be practical and business-like to secure the future of the Parish. David Brand agreed with everything Susan has said. Carol Buckley also claimed that her letters hadn't been circulated. (NB PCC sec can confirm they have). Derek Millbank on the point in the voting about the sale of 25 Northway that was supposed to be confidential at the last meeting now we are talking about it and it is now public and the rest of the Parish were not aware that it was to be sold so we can afford to pay for the project. I don't think that's right. I agree with Susan that we are rushing things much too quickly.

Cliff Bell said one of his questions that he put forward was "*Could the PCC please inform the parishioners of the current cost and the expected start date of the project?*" People are anxious to know. Canon Alistair reminded people that the information was deemed confidential whilst negotiations are taking place and the PCC decides whether that should be made public.

Canon Alistair asked when the next PCC Meeting would be. – PCC secretary replied stating that the Standing Committee are to meet and decide and would inform the PCC Members accordingly.

Next APCM would be around Easter next year.

Derek Millbank requested that no further decisions are made on the St Martin's project before the next PCC Meeting. PCC Sec said that would be correct.

Canon Alistair wished everyone a Happy Advent and Christmas.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 9.00pm