

St Paul's Church Dorking PCC
Monday May 4th 2020 at 7.45

held on ZOOM

Chair: Ruth Bushyager

Minutes: Caroline Rose

Minutes (final)

Welcome: Graham Everness opened the meeting in Prayer

Present :John Arnold, Catherine Barker, Annabel Blanch, Malcolm Boother, Ruth Bushyager, Alex Cacouris, Catherine Carter Shaw, Lawrence Comber, Graham Everness, Alison Everness, Simon Feraday, Jenny Firth, Oli Fricker, Jackie Gardner, Steve Henwood, Dawn Lucas, Maggie Hill, Ian Poole, Caroline Rose, Paul Studley, Karen Wheatley, Nick White

Apologies: Katie Mackay

1. Vicar's report:

- Ruth thanked the 5 members of the PCC whose term of office should have ended in April 2020 and John Arnold, standing down as Deanery Synod representative, for readily and generously agreeing to continue serving until the Autumn when we can hold our APCM , thus providing continuity and making administration easier at this time of change.
- **Ruth's appointment as Bishop of Horsham announced Wednesday April 29th.** Ruth thanked everyone for their kind messages and cards . She explained that the onset of the Covid-19 crisis had derailed the announcement of her appointment and path to her departure. The current Church of England directive that all ordinations be postponed until September may affect the consecration. The planned Consecration on June 24th at Westminster Abbey is cancelled but may be replaced by a private service in the Chapel at Lambeth Palace attended by the required 3 bishops present to allow consecration to take place on that date.

Ruth outlined her responsibilities as a Suffragan Bishop in the Diocese of Chichester with specific responsibility for West Sussex, encompassing 270 Churches, University of Chichester, as well as Diocesan overseas and safeguarding responsibilities. She stressed that she was moving out of her comfort zone to a very Anglo- Catholic diocese, where there has historically been one of the highest levels of opposition to the priestly ministry of women in the country

- In answer to invited questions regarding the forthcoming vacancy and the appointment of a new incumbent:
 1. The wardens confirmed that early discussions with Martin Breadmore Archdeacon of Dorking indicated that we should not expect a long 'interregnum' which can be the case after a long incumbency or one that had had been problematic and that our patrons CPAS will work closely with the PCC leading us through the process.

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- The possible circumstances when 'a preferred candidate route' of appointing a new incumbent might be used as at North Holmwood last year were explained as inappropriate in this instance. Bishop Andrew had confirmed that there would be an open interview process and normal shortlisting.
- In response to inquiries as to whether Alex Cacouris, appointed as Associate Vicar only last year to support our growing Church and Ruth as Area Dean could take over the parish, Ruth confirmed that Alex could apply for the vacancy as part of the open interview process and that he would be a strong candidate.. Ruth invited PCC members to contact the wardens or the Archbishop of Dorking with any further questions about the process.
- In response to concerns that her departure and the appointment of a new incumbent and a new Area Dean would affect our clergy staffing Ruth agreed that there was a need to look at the whole picture going forward, but that the present staffing commitment was more than justified to take our mission and ministry forward.
- The urgency of writing our parish profile, much changed since 2014 which would underpin the advertisement of this vacancy, was stressed by Ruth who advised that the appealing nature of such a profile was key to her decision to apply to St Paul's in 2014. The wardens confirmed that PCC input to such revisions would be sought and that the CPAS, our Patron, will lead us through the process.
- Concern was raised that the appointment of a new Church warden in October, partway through the appointment process would be difficult. Ruth shared confidentially that Sarah Beasley had accepted the candidacy for Church warden in full knowledge of Ruth's new appointment, feeling that the Lord had lined her up for this role. Ruth stressed that of course others may stand for election at the APCM so Sarah's appointment was not to be regarded as a foregone conclusion furthermore this information was highly confidential and must not be discussed by PCC members beyond the meeting.

Appointment of the Curate: Ruth advised the PCC that this was still likely to happen and that Becky was keen to come although her arrival date is uncertain : Ordinations have been postponed until the Autumn and Ruth's departure means that we will not have in post the required training incumbent. Ruth shared confidentially, that Bishop Jo has worked hard to put into place a creative solution which would involve Becky splitting her working week between St Paul's and a hospital chaplaincy where the incumbent would be her trainer until we have appointed a new vicar, at which point, Becky would be with St Paul's full time. Ruth confirmed that the parish does not pay Becky's stipend and that there will be no accommodation costs as this was being given free of charge by a church family.

2.Covid-19

Financial report : Oli spoke to his Financial Report :April YTD circulated before the meeting highlighting Income and Expenditure: We are at present in a strong position, better than that which we forecast and are fortunate not to be reliant on Sunday collections. He voiced a note of caution however as we look towards the Autumn and Winter when economic depression may affect our income

Staffing: given our strong financial position, our values and the fact that most are working all of their hours and more, the Standing Committee do not recommend applying to the Government's Furlough scheme for any of our staff; either payroll staff or contractors.

Please come informed and prayerfully prepared for the meeting, having read the Minutes of the last meeting and any papers and reports submitted. If you wish to raise an item for a future PCC meeting, please inform the Secretary or Chairman two weeks before

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Concern was raised that we were not using the opportunity of empty buildings to undertake a deep clean which could be asked of our cleaner Lisa . The wardens confirmed that access to the buildings over the past few weeks had been restricted but in conjunction with Sue Swain Fossey they were looking to a plan to put a deep clean in place either with a contractor or with our own cleaner.

The PCC was asked to approve our current approach to staff remuneration which will be reviewed at the end of May. :

This was agreed unanimously

Parish Share: OF outlined , the Diocesan Plan for Parish Share rebates to alleviate Parish finances and their offer of £1775 to St Paul's and secondly the Dioceses own cash flow crisis.The PCC was asked to support the SC recommendation that

- 1. That we do not claim the parish share rebate offered by the diocese**

21 in favour

One Abstention (on the grounds of conflict of interest)

- 2. that instead we repay our remaining parish share for 2020 in May to aid the diocese's cash flow.**

21 in favour

One Abstention (on the grounds of conflict of interest)

Philip Ellis: several PCC members voiced their thanks to Philip for his willingness and indispensable hard work, upwards of 40 hours a week before Easter to provide the ongoing high quality online services for the Church family and beyond. Whilst all agreed Philip should be paid in some way, concern was raised regarding Philip's employment position , currently furloughed and possible tax liabilities of accepting payment from St Paul's.

PCC were asked to support the Standing Committee recommendation that we should offer Philip a substantial gift in view of his exceptional and valuable service in providing online services. As follows:

1. To approve a gift of £1000 to Philip Ellis in recommendation of his tremendous efforts to enable our rapid transition to high quality online services.

This was agreed unanimously

2. To authorise the standing committee to approve further gifts up to £500 per calendar month.

21 in favour One Abstention

Philip's position as a volunteer was acknowledged as an extraordinary case, but others were cited by the PCC (Helena and Ian Twentyman, Emily Lissaman and Nicola Glass) who may be working many extra hours and should be considered for extra remuneration. Ruth assured that the Standing Committee were regularly reviewing this and were asking staff to keep a record of the hours they were working.

Ruth asked the PCC to take special note of Oli's prayer notes and requests in his report reminding all that we must not take our financial situation for granted.

Staffing during the Church Closure : Church buildings and online services:

Ruth reported that: Mick Taylor and Andy Ruty continued to look after the Church buildings and grounds.

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There continued to be huge amounts of hard work put into online services and although the staff team had begun to look at plans in preparation for the end of lockdown, it was anticipated that some online provision would be needed for sometime to come as we will have to comply with restrictions and as the vulnerable and elderly continue to isolate.

APCM: Ruth informed the PCC that our preferred date for an APCM , September 17th will have to be cancelled in line with instructions by the Archbishops Council and legal office stating October as the earliest we can hold this meeting. An early October meeting avoiding half term is preferred. .

AOB

PCC Awayday: Our original plans for May 16th have been cancelled. Whilst it was agreed that there should be a similar event in October/ November after the APCM, allowing the new PCC to plan forward , that we should use May 16th too. After some discussion about the possibility of using the time to discuss the parish profile was agreed given the impending vacancy and the number of decisions to be made that we would hold a morning of prayer and contemplation with guided readings . Thought is to be given to the exact format with a possible zoom session at each end of the morning . PCC to be advised.

Final remarks: In answer to final questions about the vacancy, it was confirmed that whilst the PCC would be invited to be involved in the preparation of the Parish Profile, the present incumbent steps back from this task.

Meeting closed with Prayers led by Lawrence Comber at 9.00pm

Dates of future meetings

Next PCC Meetings: Tuesday May 19th (Zoom)

'PCC Away Day' - Morning 16 May,,: Prayer and contemplation at home 'bookended ' by Zoom sessions.

APCM : to be confirmed