**MINUTES of the PARISHIONERS MEETING & ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

**of St Mary’s Woburn 2020**

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| **Date of meeting** | Thursday 1st October 2020 via ZOOM |
| **Time of meeting** | 7.30 P.M. |
| **Meeting Venue** | Virtual meeting via Zoom |

**Due to the restrictions around social gathering the meeting took place via Zoom.**

**Meeting of Parishioners**

1. **Prayers and Introduction**

Steve opened the meeting with prayer. He explained that the Parishioners meeting is solely for the purpose of electing Wardens, and this year also for Deanery Synod Representatives

1. **Election of Wardens & Deanery Synod Representatives (DSRs)**

Steve explained that Alison Macpherson is willing to continue in office but this will be her eleventh year as Warden. The normal tenure of a Warden is 6 years and therefore the meeting needed to approve Alison’s re-appointment for a further year. Richard Langford proposed and Jean Wayment seconded that Alison be allowed to continue for one more year. This was unanimously approved. Both George and Alison had been formally nominated and as there were no other nominations both appointments were confirmed.

Steve thanked George and Alison for all their help and support in the past year and said how good it was to have such a dependable leadership team.

Bob Franklin and Malcolm Curtis both finished their three -year terms as DSRs in 2020. Bob had previously given notice that he would not stand again. Malcolm was willing to continue in this role and Linda Cudjoe had both agreed to stand as a DSR to replace Bob.

Both Malcolm and Linda had been proposed and seconded for this role. As there were no other candidates, they were both appointed.

The meeting was then closed.

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

1. **Apologies for absence.**

Apologies had been received from Pauline Adamson. There were 21 people at the meeting and no apologies.

1. **Minutes of the meeting of 4th April 2019**

Acceptance of the minutes of last year’s meeting was proposed by George, seconded by Alison. There was a unanimous vote in favour by all those who had attended the meeting.

1. **Election of PCC members**

Paula Sawers and David Knapman had both served three years on the PCC and therefore needed to be re-elected. Both were willing to stand and had submitted their nomination forms. As there were no other candidates they were automatically elected back onto the PCC.

1. **Presentation of the accounts and report for the year to 31 December 2019, for approval and adoption by the APCM.**

David Knapman had previously distributed by email, and placed copies in church, of the “Report and Financial Statements, 31st December 2019”.

He gave the following report:

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| a. | The purpose of this report today is to enable the Annual financial report and accounts for the year to 31 December 2019 to be adopted by the APCM. |
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| b. | Whilst the accounts are not formally required to be prepared with the full statutory information, as a matter of good practice, they have been prepared on an accrual’s basis, in line with the relevant accounting and legal requirements for Charities. |
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| c. | I usually report on the PCC’s financial controls but to keep this brief the controls remain the same as set out in item 4 of the 2019 APCM minutes.  From March this year all payments are made online, initiated by me and authorised by either Ian Wayment or George Atkinson-Clark. Effectively two (electronic) signatures for all payments. |
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| d. | Resume of accounts:  Page 1 sets out the Aims and Mission of St Mary’s; Structure, Governance & Management and Membership of the PCC.  Pages 2 to 7 cover Committees, Church attendance and the Electoral Roll; The PCC’s Objectives, Activities & Achievements; Mission and Evangelism; Risk Policies; the main activities of the Fabric Committee; the financial review and aims and finally details of the PCC’s Reserves and Investment policies. Our reserves policy remains unchanged. It is:  *to hold at least the equivalent of 4 months budgeted general unrestricted fund expenditure or not less than £20,000 in general unrestricted fund reserves.*  David proposed this policy be renewed for a further twelve months. Yvonne seconded the proposal and everyone voted in favour.  Page 8 is the Examiner’s report and Tim Gage, a qualified Chartered Accountant, has given the accounts a clean report.  Page 9 sets out the Statement of Financial activities, in other words the income and expenditure for the year, culminating in an overall deficit of £42,066. The unrestricted funds, which in the main deal with the day to day running of the church, report a surplus of £5,845, whilst a deficit of £48,677 arises in restricted funds. Restricted funds can only be spent on their intended projects. The restricted deficit was planned as it reflects the use of funds for the new lighting scheme.  Page 10 is the Balance Sheet showing the assets and liabilities of the PCC which at the end of the year disclosed £70,260 of net assets, which includes unrestricted and restricted funds.  The majority of the assets are represented by bank deposit accounts.  Pages 11 to 13 contain the detailed accounting policies used in preparing these accounts.  Pages 14 and 15 contain further notes backing up information in the Statement of Financial Activity on page 9.  Pages 16 & 17 disclose further information as required and support to the Balance Sheet.  Pages 17 & 18 show detailed information of the movements on all the funds managed by the PCC. |
|  | That completed David’s report on the accounts. He then covered the following points of information: |
|  | Before our world was turned upside down by the virus menace, the PCC approved a deficit budget which would reduce our funds by about £14,000. This reflected planned expenditure of funds we had available for sound system improvements, toilet redecoration and headstones maintenance, for example.  Then virus restrictions arrived which meant that St Mary’s would lose income from service collections, funeral and wedding fees and other activity- based income. Consequently, spending has been halted as far as possible and our church roll members were encouraged to continue, improve or start standing orders to help the church through this lean period.  St Mary’s has been superbly supported during 2020 by our standing order donors and with careful management, I anticipate that St Mary’s will end the year in a good financial position.  One further piece of news is that Woburn PCC applied to be registered as a separate charity, on the advice of the Charity Commission. On 2nd May 2019, Woburn PCC was registered as charity No. 1183236.  Although there has been a delay to this APCM taking place, the accounts for 2019 have been filed with the Charity Commission and the annual return has been completed and filed as well. This is just one of a number of new disciplines we have to follow. |
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|  | David, on behalf of the PCC, very warmly thanked donors for all their support whether by small or large sums. He emphasised that this support is especially vital in current circumstances and St Mary’s is blessed by everyone’s financial support. |
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|  | He thanked Fran Brown for her hard work in compiling the gift aid returns during 2019. He explained that this work is valuable and much appreciated and takes a burden off his workload. “Thank you very much Fran”. During lockdown the task has reverted to David at the moment, but is much reduced for obvious reasons. |
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|  | The meeting was given the chance to ask questions. There were no questions but George Atkinson-Clark commended David on his foresight in arranging the online payment facility. He said that this facility had made it possible to easily continue to pay bills and invoices despite lockdown restrictions. David then proposed that the report and accounts for the year to 31 December 2019 be adopted by the APCM. Richard Langford seconded the proposal and everyone voted in favour. |
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David proposed Tim Gage be appointed as independent examiner of the church

accounts for 2020. Ian Wayment seconded and everyone was in favour.

1. **Electoral Roll report**

John Adamson gave the following update of the electoral roll:

* This year there are 88 members on the Electoral Roll of the Church,   
  comprising 23 Woburn residents and 65 non-residents.

1. **Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Compliance with House of Bishops guidance.**

Paula reported that the Safeguarding policy is in compliance with the House of Bishops guidance.

She also said she waiting for some DBS certs and that Ian and Jean needed to renew their registration.

1. **Other Reports**

Prior to the meeting reports had been made available covering: Fabric, Sunday School & Next Generation, Let’s Get Together and Deanery Synod.

1. **Rectors Address**

The bullet points of Steve’s address were:

1. **Our Vision, Faith and Identity**

Steve started his address by reminding everyone of the importance of our Vison, Faith and Identity statements. He emphasised these were the basis of everything the church does and believes in. They underpin all our activities.

1. **Thanks**

* Richard Langford for all his work on the church website.
* Tim & Christine Gage for their musical input to the online services
* Pastoral Group leaders.
* Fay & Matt for their work with the young people via online media.
* Standing Committee members.
* Janice in her role of Benefice Administrator
* Malcolm Curtis for his work as our Lay Reader
* Fran Brown for her help in producing Fellowship News
* PCC members, sidesmen, readers and intercessors.

1. **Our current situation**

* On line services. These are of enormous value to those who cannot join in. However, it is important to keep the discipline of using the online services for worshipping on Sunday rather than using them as “catch up” options.
* Church services. The new format is strange but becoming the “norm”. Despite all the restrictions it is good to meet together and to have fellowship.
* Benefice situation. All churches now have on line services.
* Immediate future. None of the “big” services will be able to take place i.e. Remembrance Sunday and Christmas services. The only exception will be Christmas morning service. Some of the Christmas services may be recorded and made available via YouTube.
* Youth Work. Fay has been appointed as Youth Worker. She will be using on line platforms to meet with the Sunday School & Next Generation children and those in Followers and Explorers.
* Pastoral Groups. Everyone has had opportunity to join a Pastoral Group. These provide an opportunity for fellowship, prayer, Bible study and social inter action.

1. **Moving forward**

* Reference Deuteronomy 1 – the children of Israel grumbling about their life in the wilderness and wanting to return to Egypt. Steve drew a parallel to our current situation and warned against the danger of not being willing to move forward in faith, grumbling about the situation and wanting to go back to the way things were.
* Steve warned against this attitude. “God will redeem the situation”.
* APCM 2018. Psalm 127.1 “Unless the Lord build the house the builders labour in vain”. A reminder that we can be busy BUT fruitless.
* Matthew 16.18 “I will build my church and the Gates of Hades will not prevail against it.” This is part of our Vision statement. It’s not us who builds the house but Jesus.
* Moving on we will be claiming that promise through the Holy Spirit. There will be teaching on the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit and space for the Holy Spirit to move in our meetings.

Steve then concluded his address by reading 2 Corinthians 3:17-18. *Now, the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

1. **AOB**

George asked what would be happening regards Remembrance Day service. Steve said this was not happening due to COVID-19 restrictions. Also, the RBL have cancelled the meeting at the memorial on that morning.

Ros raised the issue that there was no activity for children over the age of about 15. Linda Cudjoe picked up on this point, saying that her two youngest children were now too old for Followers and had nothing to join. Fay said there was good teaching material available for this older age group which she would share.

Anne Barker thanked everyone for making her feel welcome in the church and said she is enjoying worshipping with us.

Alison thanked Steve for his leadership both in the current difficult times and in the normal times.

There being no other business Steve closed the meeting in prayer.