

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, SOUTHDOWN, HARPENDEN

Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on Thursday 29th April 2010 in the Church Hall

The meeting opened with prayers.

Present 49 members of the congregation were present.

1. Apologies for Absence

Jane Joseph, Brenda Cottle, Maureen Lacey, Julia Smith, Janet Saxby, Di Borthwick, Fiona & Nick Pearce, John & June Jones, Sally Creedy, John Colegate, Renee Swanwick, Anne Edwards

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Adoption of the minutes of the Easter Vestry meeting held on Thursday 30th April 2009 were proposed by David Nye, seconded by John Borthwick and carried unanimously. The minutes were then signed as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Election of Churchwardens

Two nominations had been received prior to the meeting:

Matt Barter, proposed by Lesley Richardson and seconded by John Borthwick, and

Margaret Creighton, proposed by Ian Richmond and seconded by Liz Sergeant.

In the absence of any other nominations, Matt and Margaret were elected unanimously to serve as churchwardens for the coming year, 2010/2011.

Philippa congratulated Matt and Margaret on behalf of the congregation, and expressed her sincere thanks to Ian Richmond for his service as warden over the past four years. Matt also added his personal thanks to Ian, and on behalf of the Deputy Churchwardens, and the wider church congregation, for everything he has done. Matt said that Ian has proved just how reliable, dependable and committed to St John's he is over his four-year term of office, which has seen such milestones as the Centenary year celebrations and the challenges of the vacancy. Matt commended Ian for his gentle guidance, his patience and his diplomacy, which have helped ensure that St John's is the community it is today.

Ian thanked Philippa and Matt for their kind words, and expressed his gratitude to everyone for their support during his term of office. He felt privileged and honoured to have had the opportunity to come back to serve for a second term as warden. He acknowledged that, as warden, he was just one small part of a much bigger team, which included the ministerial team and everyone in the congregation. It was a team he always found very co-operative and helpful. Ian expressed his willingness to continue to serve St John's, and stated that he would always be available to offer advice at an appropriate time.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, SOUTHDOWN, HARPENDEN

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Thursday 29th April 2010 in the Church Hall

1. Apologies for absence

Members present and apologies for absence were the same as for the Meeting of Parishioners.

2. Minutes of the last APCM

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 30th April 2009 were proposed by Ian Ashton, seconded by Ken Hollows and carried unanimously. The minutes were then signed as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Electoral Roll

The report of Alison Gardiner, the Electoral Roll Officer, was read by Alison. The new Roll has been completed and displayed in church since 15th April 2010.

The number on the electoral roll currently stands at 277. There is a net increase of 9 since the last APCM. One person had moved away during the year, and there had been three deaths.

Of the 277 entries:

177 are female

100 are male

175 are resident in the (ecclesiastical) parish

102 are not resident in the Parish

Philippa thanked Alison for compiling the roll and keeping it up to date throughout the year.

Adoption of the electoral roll was proposed by David Brown, seconded by Sheila Satchell and carried unanimously.

5. Churchwardens' Report

The report was circulated with the paperwork for the meeting, and had been delivered verbally to the PCC at the last meeting.

The question was asked as to whether St John's is still a training parish. Philippa replied that we are, and Charles Burch is a non-stipendiary training curate.

6. Secretary's Report

The report was circulated with the paperwork for the meeting and no queries were raised. Philippa remarked that the Group Reports are a testimony to all those people who kept things going during the vacancy. The numbers of attendees at the festivals and services were very similar to last year.

7. Treasurer's Report and PCC accounts

Anthony ran through the main points of his report and the PCC accounts, which had been circulated with the paperwork for the meeting, after being adopted at the last PCC meeting in March.

i) Trustees Report: This year, the accounts include a Trustees report, largely based on the Parish Profile, in order to comply with the Charities Commission requirements.

ii) Prior Year Adjustment: note 14 on p15.

The Finances Committee has proposed to change the accounting treatment of both the Church Hall and Linwood Road to reflect a more accurate representation of their value to the PCC. They have been shown at original cost of both buildings, minus depreciation. This has been calculated as a prior year adjustment, so the accounts are shown as if they had been reflected like this in both 2008 and 2009.

iii) Designated and Restricted Funds: p14 * footnote

This year, the funds in both the St John's Players and the Flower Guild accounts have been reclassified as non-restricted or Designated, meaning that there are no legal restrictions on the use of these funds. This is because these funds have been collected as payment for services, rather than as donations for specific purposes. It was noted that the Choir Fund remains a Restricted Fund, because these donations had been made specifically for church music. David Nye confirmed that the reclassification of these funds (St John's Players and Flower Guild) was appropriate. Anthony confirmed that it was not the intention of the PCC to use these funds in any other way, and that they would continue to be administered as separate funds by Flower Guild and St John's Players.

iv) Key points

Net result: our income and expenditure were closely matched, resulting in a loss of £1777.

The total income for 2009: £157,574.

The total expenditure for 2009: £159,351

The largest expenditure is the Parish Share (£73, 896), which was lower than last year, due to the fact we had no vicar.

Water damage repairs represented £5000.

Anthony drew our attention to the fact that as well as our annual giving of 10% to four charities, we also give to several other charities throughout the year, totalling £15,513.

David Brown enquired whether the recruitment costs (advertising) could be off set against the vacancy fund. Anthony stated that there is only provision for costs of visiting clergy, and day-to-day upkeep of the vicarage in this Fund.

John Hammond asked why the property at Linwood Rd is shown as a Curate's House. Anthony replied that it is not an investment property, as it is not something we could ever sell as it is held in trust for the Diocese. As a training parish, we may need it for future curates.

v) Outlook for next year

Anthony stated that the expenditure in 2010 will be more than in 2009, due to the full payment of the Parish Share, and the balance to be paid on the Hall roof. There is an urgent need to look at increasing our income and cutting our costs. The Finance committee will be reviewing at our expenditure, but there is a real need to generate funds. He stated that we are facing interesting and difficult times ahead. It was noted that as a church and also as a Diocese, our average % of giving per person on the Stewardship roll is very low.

This year the accounts were independently examined by Trevor Neal, as the income and expenditure in the year did not exceed £250,000. Anthony expressed his grateful thanks, on behalf of the PCC, to Trevor Neal for his time.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by David Brown and seconded by David Young, and carried unanimously.

Philippa thanked Anthony and the Finance Committee for keeping us afloat. She recognized the fact that St John's is very fortunate in having a number of professional finance people in the congregation.

8. Report from Deanery Synod

This was circulated with the meeting papers, and there were no questions. It was noted that Michael Hughes is standing down as Deanery Secretary. Elizabeth Brown has agreed to take on this role.

9. Elections

a) Deanery Synod

As **Melanie Crowley** is standing down as lay member of the Deanery Synod before her term of office expires due to her ordination, we are entitled to replace one member of the Deanery Synod. We have received one nomination:

Ian Richmond was proposed by Lesley Richardson and seconded by Peter Richardson. Philippa invited any further nominations. There were none. Ian Richmond was elected unanimously to serve on the Denary Synod.

b) Parochial Church Council

Those whose term of office expired were:

John Jones and Anthony Davis.

There are a total of three vacancies (as Margaret's place has been vacated now that she has been elected warden).

Three nominations have been received to date:

John Jones, proposed by Ian Richmond, seconded by John Borthwick

Anthony Davis, proposed by Paul Bedding, seconded by Matthew Barter

Tim Davey proposed by Celia Halsey, seconded by Paul Bedding

There were no other nominations; therefore the three nominations were presented to the meeting 'en bloc'. They were all elected unanimously to serve for three years (2010-2013).

c) Appointment of Sidesmen

The list was available for perusal. Philippa read out the new names. Adoption of all the names was proposed by Paul Bedding, seconded by Heather Nye and agreed unanimously.

d) Appointment of Independent Examiner

This year, the accounts will not need an Auditor. Under the Charities Act, the PCC can appoint an Independent Examiner. The meeting was informed that a huge debt of thanks is owed to Trevor Neal, who has been adviser to the Ward Bequest and the PCC accounts and is now standing down. Anyone willing to stand was requested to come forward.

10. Report from the Trustees of the Ted Ward Bequest

The accounts and annual financial report were circulated with the meeting papers. Anthony Davis reported that there was no movement this year. The total value of the fund at the end of the year was £299,215. The meeting was informed that the Trustees had unanimously adopted the report and the financial statement in April.

11. Group Reports

This year there are 15 reports from the various church groups, which were circulated with the meeting papers.

Philippa recorded her grateful thanks on behalf of us all, for the hard work and dedication of all those people who lead and organize, and attend these groups.

13. Any Other Business

The questions and comments all related to the church's finances.

- i. Pat Hudis expressed concern over the predicted £18,000 deficit, and felt strongly that, as a church, we need to take more responsibility for meeting the challenge of giving more. Philippa replied that it is a very real challenge, and gave credit to Stewardship and Finance committees who have been trying to develop a strategy to manage this. Philippa agreed that we can't just gloss over it, and we need to ask ourselves some tough questions both as individuals and as a church.
- ii. Moira Carrington suggested that the electoral roll could be used to target people. Margaret Creighton reported that was one of the approaches used in the last campaign, though there are many members of the congregation who are not on the Electoral roll, particularly some of the families who come to Junior Church.
- iii. John Hammond asked whether the weekly bag collection was making a difference, and Anthony replied that it was making a significant difference month on month. He estimated that over the year there may be an increase of approximately £3000.

- iv. Betty Hollows suggested that the majority of congregation may not know how much it costs to run the church. It was agreed to increase communication through the church magazine, the pew sheet, and a specific leaflet.
- v. Warren Greaves asked about the plans for the repair/replacement of the Church roof. Matt Barter replied that quotes had been obtained, some of which were in the region of £350,000 to replace the Church roof completely. We would also take opportunity to insulate the roof at this time. Matt stated that it is a huge challenge. A strategy, to decide how to raise funds and how to carry out the work, would be proposed to the PCC. The aim is to launch a fund raising plan by September this year. Matt stressed the need to ensure this plan was coordinated with the Stewardship strategy. Philippa agreed that this is a serious challenge, and that fund-raising is a priority which needs to be as painless as possible but have a maximum impact.
- vi. Nick Lockett asked whether the church hall was losing money due to the cost of recent repairs. Matt replied that the Hall hiring charges had been revised from 1st January, in line with market value. The increase is not yet evident in the accounts. Going forward, the rates will be reviewed regularly on an annual basis.
- vii. Chris Lockett suggested that we involve the whole Parish in the fund raising for the roof. Philippa agreed we should call upon the parish in the widest sense: not just the congregation but all who call upon us for baptisms, weddings and funerals.
- viii. Lauryn Awbrey suggested that the issue is a wider one than just creating a strategy for fundraising; she suggested we need to develop a vision for what we do as a church, as disciples of Christ in 21st century. How we raise money needs to be part of our mission as a church.

14. Vicar's Address

A copy of the Vicar's address is attached.

The meeting closed with the Collect of Catherine of Sienna at 9.30pm.