

## St Peter's and St Paul's APCM 12 noon, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2019

### Annual Vestry meeting

#### 1. Welcome, introduction and apologies:

**Apologies:** Dan Connold, Winnie Clark, Andy and Margaret Hammond, Debbie Jones, John and Lorna Kahan, Eileen Kattenhorn, Dave and Michelle Pryke, Doro and Anna-Louise Wiggington, Chris and Jenny Waddington.

Johnny welcomed everyone to the two meetings being held today. He thanked David for his on-going service as Church Secretary. He also thanked the PC,C believing they are one of the best he has worked with in his ministry. He had responded to the 11 written questions received following the distribution of the APCM reports last week and invited any and all questions today.

#### 2. Minutes of 2018

The Minutes were proposed by Lyn Moseley and seconded by Maggie Carpenter.

#### 3. Matters arising

There were none.

#### 4. Parish Charities

Johnny invited all comments to Chris Redmond, Treasurer.

#### 5. Proposed amendment to the term of wardens

Johnny explained that the PCC had considered the possibility of extending the wardens' term during the course of three meetings and that the PCC support an amendment to extend the current term of 6 years to the possibility of nine years; this needs to be voted on today in order to enact this in 2020. Lesley Pull asked what lay behind the suggested amendment? Johnny talked of the importance of continuity; at present Sue would stand down in 2020 and John in 2021. Johnny recognised the fine balance between the advantages of continuity and raising up fresh leadership. This possible amendment has been discussed with the Archdeacon - extending the term of wardens is encouraged across the diocese. The motion to extend the current term of wardens from a maximum of 6 years to a maximum of 9 years as of next April APCM was proposed by Andy Birmingham and seconded by Steve Ball. Three people abstained.

#### 6. Election of church wardens

No other people were standing today. **Sue proposed by David Pearson and seconded by Tom Brown; John was proposed by David Pearson and seconded by Alice Haward.** The Church Wardens were duly elected; Ian Carpenter prayed for them.

#### 7. Election of sides-people

The following are the current sides-people:

Bob Avery

Roy Chilton

Noel Chilton  
Carter Collins  
Mick Drewry  
Ken Grist  
Tim Jacob  
John King  
Eve McFarlane  
Perdita McRoberts  
Catherine Pull  
Audrey Rainer  
David Smith  
Kevin Swift  
Wendy Wilson  
Fred Wilson  
John Wigginton

John Taylor and Sylvia Grist had been omitted from the list and Audrey asked for her name to be removed. Johnny commented that we are looking at how the Welcome team joins up with sides-people and that this will be resolved before next year's APCM. A question was asked whether someone who was seriously ill should remain on the list? Johnny will speak to the individual concerned as would not want to be disrespectful.

## **8. Close of annual vestry meeting at 12.12pm**

### **APCM**

1. **Minutes of 2018 meeting** – Minutes should read: 'After the ballot papers had been taken in and counted, Ian Carpenter, Jane Gay, Mike Connold and Kevin Swift were elected to the PCC. Johnny prayed for the PCC.'

A second correction was that Audrey asked about the Vicar's stipend rather than the Parish share. Johnny told the meeting his salary but Babs Moore qualified that there are other items to the stipend including pension, water, and council tax.

### **2. Matters arising**

No matters arising were raised.

### **3. PCC Elections**

Maggie, Gemma and Kim's terms of office have now ended. Johnny thanked them for their service on the PCC.

Johnny asked whether the meeting would be prepared to appoint three to the PCC and co-opt one so that no paper-based election was needed. Kevin Wren asked whether we are setting a precedent if we do so, this year? Ian commented that this is a one-off suggestion and not setting a precedent, as it will be revisited every year. Julie asked whether there were a finite number of PCC members that could be elected given the size of our electoral roll.

**The proposal was put to the meeting - 3 people voted against and five people abstained.**

Johnny invited the candidates forward to speak about why they want to serve and what qualifies them to serve.

*Barbara Ball* has always enjoyed working and being part of this church. She sees things that need doing and is one who gets them done e.g. helping set up Kidz Club, Chat Room and, more recently, she saw the need for the children's co-ordinator role. Similarly, she stepped up to help with the safeguarding team when Andy needed assistance. She is passionate about working for God in our community and nation. She really enjoys being part of church more than ever and would really like to serve on the PCC, as she believes her strategic, admin and team working skills that she uses at Thirtyone:eight will be helpful.

*Andy Lawrence* has lived in Hextable for 2.5 years; a retired civil servant with experience of managing large organisations at a senior level, he is part of the senior leadership team of two charities and is a member of the National Working group on Child Abuse linked to faith and belief. His vision is to see people, the church, and our community, filled to overflowing with the transforming love and power of Jesus Christ. His promise is that he will work towards the vision with, and as part of, the PCC.

*Anna Culliford* said she cares about people and the life of the church and community around us. She grew up in the church, left and has come back again and, having seen many positives recently is passionate for the future of the work in this place and beyond. She feels strongly that she is here to represent her generation within the family that are here currently and those who are yet to join us.

*Angela Chapman* has been a member of STPH for 27 years and has been involved in different roles or groups over the years, including children's ministry, prayer groups, PCC, hospitality. She said that she has had a few years' break and is ready to serve again. If elected, she will pledge and commit to be a prayerful servant for the good of the congregation as well as the parish community. She will ask God's help through prayer about each project or work that she becomes involved in, to seek His way forward for us. She feels that she is honest and trustworthy with God's help and would hope to serve the church well. She knows that it won't always be easy! She is excited for all that God has for us in 2019 and beyond and hopes that we fully engage in relationships with Him and with each other to discover the treasure that is ahead of us.

Tom Brown asked who was co-opted? Johnny replied that was Andy Birmingham as our Safeguarding Officer.

Johnny will be talking to the PCC at the next meeting about co-opting Catherine Pull for a year, seeking to be truly representative of age and gender.

#### **4. Reports**

**APCM Bundle of Reports** The PCC's annual report and various team reports were made available in advance of the meeting. There were no questions arising.

##### **Electoral roll officer's report**

David gave a report about the electoral roll. There are **179** parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll, of which 52.5% are resident in the ecclesiastical parish. This compares with **255** last year but the 2018 figure was very much inflated as there were quite a number on the roll who were not involved in the church in any way. Legally we were only able to remove those who had died, or we knew had moved away and no longer worshipped with us. However, this year, in common with all Anglican churches, everyone had to re-register (it's a six-yearly event), so this is a truer figure of church involvement. In all **108** names were removed. What is significant is that this year **32** new names were added and there is a potential for this to grow in the future, as a result of new people coming to church, some of whom were not able to join this year because of the six months' attendance requirements for non-parish residents. For those who like statistics, non-parish residents are more likely to have surnames beginning with the first eight letters of the alphabet

(65%). Conversely parish residents are more likely to have names beginning with last eight letters (74%)!

## **5. Finance report**

Our treasurer, Chris Redmond, provided a finance report. The accounts for the last financial year to end March 2018 are available from Sue Haward in the church office. The independent auditor is currently auditing them.

The financial highlights are:

- 2018 ended with a net surplus of 6.3k; this would have been higher save that 10k was put into the Kindergarten to pay redundancy for those staff affected.
- Reserves are currently £35k; these have been built up in the absence of a C&Y worker.
- There is an outstanding loan to the diocese relating to the annexe. Chris thanked everyone who gave to the general fund, as the amount last year was higher than the year before.
- The Parish Share has been agreed by the PCC as £66,442, which includes the vicar's stipend, the vicarage and our contribution to the national C of E. We need £13k pcm to balance the books; by the end of this year we will need £15k pcm to cover costs as a result of the appointment of a C&Y Worker.
- There have been 6 weddings and 12 funerals.
- Chris invited everyone who is not already doing so, to gift aid their giving to church so that we might benefit from the tax back from the government.

Eve McFarlane asked what the loan was for; Johnny explained that it is the repayment of a loan from the diocese in relation to the annexe.

Doreen Hadley-Rowe asked about the giving for overseas mission given Project Hope had ceased. She wondered who the monies were going to? Johnny reported on five recent gifts to the Whites (Spanish work), CRIBS, Home for Good, Release International and Lizzie Simpson (work in Turkey). PCC want to develop clearer and more focused mission partnerships. She further asked how the annual sum (£18k) had been agreed? Johnny reported that it is historical but that there is an on-going conversation at PCC about our giving and partnerships going forward.

Johnny thanked Chris for his 'Monday night, Treasurer night' and invited the church to pray for him on Mondays.

## **6. Church wardens' report**

John Wigginton spoke on behalf of the wardens concerning the church fabric.

- The biggest incident in the last year was the flood; the insurance claim is seen as a blessing in disguise as it will provide new carpet, which we desperately need, and a new roofing contract to be put in place jointly with the deanery to inspect both churches every year to prevent further issues.
- The heating system is an on-going issue, as it has effectively died, causing problems for hirers and staff over the winter. Plans for a new 'whole building' heating system are being explored and should be in place before next winter.
- The windows in the back hall and two exit doors are being replaced shortly which will help save money and heat.

- Car Park lighting has also been a problem with the movement sensors failing to work more often than not. Quotes for a replacement lighting system are being sought.
- Area Dean's visitation in February was passed with flying colours. He suggested exploring the possibility of 'church recording' for St Peter's and St Paul's, which would list everything under the roof. The Wardens will be looking for volunteers to help with this.
- The Chapel and lockup were cleared of a vast amount of accumulated 'stuff' earlier this year; the team of volunteers responsible for this were thanked.
- All fabric, goods and ornaments are present and correct.
- The War Graves Commission have approached us regarding two plaques to be placed at St Paul's as we have five war graves in the churchyard. This will be funded and maintained by the War graves commission. The desk in the vestry dedicated to Reginald Bodkin was recently photographed by Swanley History Group and will feature in a book of the fallen of WW2, as he was one.

Sue and John thanked the many 'unsung heroes' and volunteers who make the church function commenting that we as a church family would be 'lost without them'. John finished by saying that he finds it humbling to serve in the church and paid particular tribute to Sue for all that she has and continues to do.

Ken Grist asked a question about the things behind the red curtain at St Paul's. Johnny reported that the school have 'taken advantage' of goodwill and that there is a commitment to tidying this area.

Johnny reported that the window and door replacement referred to by John Wiggington have been delayed as a result of personal sickness within the business; there is commitment to this being successfully completed ASAP.

Eve McFarlane asked a question as to whether there are plans to clear the vestry behind the cross? Johnny reported that there will be a further skip as we continue to 'renew and refresh' the church fabric. He pleaded that no-one brings their unwanted 'stuff' to the church building!

John Taylor commented on the broken window in the church building.

## **7. Vicar's report**

Johnny began by stating 'God continues to be very good'! A stranger wrote to him from a medical community liaison point, saying 'I know that you are quite deep-rooted into the community...' Johnny encouraged because he wants us to be known as a church that is deeply rooted in our community for its good. He and Julie are continually blessed by serving at St. Paul's and St. Peter's and know that this is where God has called them to be.

He spoke of the encouragements across church life, from the measures of health and growth of congregations across all four of our main services, the need to attend to our worship space at St Peter's in order to fit in the increased numbers of chairs that are needed (new platform, removal of sound desk, carpet) and the addition of 32 adults to the electoral role to name a few. The completion of the Annexe remains the main goal for the rest of 2019 and, despite frustrations and disappointments, he remains convinced that we are fulfilling this project to the honour of God. Johnny will have detailed plans to bring to the church family in the next few weeks that reflect a solid way forward in terms of renegotiated spec, costings and fundraising. Johnny spoke of a word given by Paul Wiggins at a recent early morning prayer meeting about a logjam and Johnny's own conviction that the logjam is the finance, as £200k of pledges still reveal that we have a £400k gap – this will be the main item at the May PCC meeting. He restated that PCC desire remains that this vision of nurturing creativity, offering hospitality and deepening community will come

to pass soon for our villages and beyond.

Other highlights of the past year include:

- The success of the Ashburnham weekend and the on-going plan for such events every other year. A Harvest Supper is planned for the autumn, as time for us to be relaxed together as a family feels important.
- Thy Kingdom Come, as an initiative last year, was significant; realised how do-able and accessible it was to produce postcards. 147 prayer requests received.
- Light Party in the autumn; there are people here in church today as a result of that.
- Double services at Christmas – God was so good; privilege to believe God for new things. A godly hunch is often how God speaks to Johnny.
- The words ‘wait’ and patience’ are hard words for Johnny at times but he sees God’s hand of provision in the appointment of Emma-Jane from the autumn; this gives hope and encouragement regarding the completion of the annexe.
- Parish relationships continue to flourish with increasing favour from Hextable Parish Council and Swanley District Council. Chaplaincy at Emerson’s is a continuing blessing and privilege, with plans for increased activities, particularly the provision of a monthly communion service.
- April 2019 Overflow congregation was ‘remarkable... it felt like the closest thing to sound of heaven’.
- Most difficult and blessed Holy Week recently; God very gracious and Johnny invited ECG feedback (encouragements, challenges, goals) from the entire congregation.

Challenges and sadness’s have included:

- A point of pastoral sadness has been the handful of church family who have chosen to drift or leave us at this point; the door is always open for their return.
- In getting our house in order, some issues have had to be addressed that had been allowed to stagnate. As a result of new Charity Commission guidelines, we had to end our formal arrangement with Project Hope, although Angela and others continue to support Gabby and Costica. We have also decided to step back from our involvement with CTSD for a season in order to be able to concentrate on parish matters and particularly the completion of the annexe. The closure of the Kindergarten was a heart-breaking but unavoidable consequence of many years of financial loss. In the midst of the challenges Johnny is grateful that all of the process steps were done in plurality, unity and unanimity of the PCC.

The goals for the coming year are around the vision:

- Loving God – the challenge as the people of God as to what this looks like in Word and worship
- Growing family – the challenge as others inconvenience us; we recognise growing numbers changes the dynamics and we need to be ok with that.
- Increasing Hope – the reality of our culture means that kingdom hope has never been more important; what do we bring of God’s goodness and grace in every situation? Johnny wants us to cultivate hope and be carriers of hope wherever we serve. He talked of a small ‘freebie’ from Ruxley Gardens at the turn of the year; a small Christmas ‘tree’ has been planted in the Vicarage garden which is growing albeit slowly; a recently purchased small magnolia which is going to be

great in 15 years! Preparing the ground, sieving the earth, working out where the stones and rubble are is kingdom stuff! Johnny finished by saying that he wants to do things that are, healthy and wise for the long term; planting for greater life and possibility, working well together as a church family.

He ended with some words from John Wimber: *“The economy of the kingdom of God is quite simple. Every new step in the kingdom costs us everything we have gained to date. A disciple is always ready to take the next step. If there is anything that characterizes Christian maturity, it is the willingness to become a beginner again for Jesus Christ. It is the willingness to put our hand in his hand and say, “I’m scared to death, but I’ll go with you. For you, Jesus, are the Pearl of great price.”*

Johnny invited Q and A.

Doreen H-R commented that she had learnt much about thankfulness during Lent and wanted to record thanks for the hard work of Johnny and Julie this past year and also for Andy and Margaret Hammond and Lorna and John Kahan who have given many years of service.

Johnny closed in prayer at 1.03pm

**\*Post meeting note:**

It was clarified after the meeting that Barbara Ball, Angela Chapman and Anna Culliford were appointed unopposed to the PCC. Andy Lawrence was likewise appointed to the vacant Deanery position, there having been no other nominations for the position.