

The meeting was held as a Zoom gathering with attendees logging in from their homes.

Present: Jema Ball (Vicar/Chair), Simon Potter (Associate Vicar), Ann Thomas (Warden), Caroline Jowett-Ive (Warden), Jenny Baker, Jo Bridgwater, Hayley Brydges, Angela Cattell, Steve Fairbairn (Secretary), Julia Gwyther, Jennifer Hall, Tony Hughes, Wendy Hughes, Andy Judd, Jo Morris (Curate), Ben Notley, Caroline Owen (Treasurer), Pauline Pearson, Yvonne Penn, Brian Richardson, Peter Robottom, Jerry Sandford, Hazel Trapnell, Tony Yeadon.

1. OPENING REFLECTION & PRAYER

Jema opened the meeting at 7:30pm and gave opening prayers based around a passage from Hebrews.

2. APOLOGIES

It was noted that apologies had been received from Caroline Simpson.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 To agree the minutes

Jema asked PCC members whether they would accept the minutes of the last meeting of January 13th 2021. It was noted that Brian Richardson's name was missing from the list of attendees on the Nov 11th 2020 minutes. No further objections were raised which led to the following proposal.

Proposal The minutes of the PCC meeting held on January 13th 2021 can be accepted as an accurate record of the proceedings and so can be signed by the Vicar.

Proposed Brian Richardson **Seconded** Peter Robottom

Result This proposal was accepted unanimously by those members who had been present at the meeting.

3.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3.3 Correspondence

Jema added an extra agenda item to cover the forthcoming Maundy Thursday service at the cathedral on April 1st. Up to 150 people can attend, albeit in a socially distanced manner. The Diocese is offering space for one person to represent each parish. Jema asked if there were any volunteers and Jo Bridgwater said she would attend.

4. ENABLING PEOPLE TO CHOOSE TO GATHER FOR WORSHIP

4.0 Church Opening Decision

Jema noted that in making decisions about resuming gathered worship, this will relate to Sundays and mid-week worship. She went on to emphasize three points.

- (i) A great deal of work has been done on risk assessments and health and safety issues to make attending church Covid-safe.
- (ii) There would be a cap on numbers until the Government lifts Covid restrictions.
- (iii) An outdoor activity on Good Friday is being planned, Explore Together@Easter, in the grounds of the churchyard aimed at all ages, with Easter scenes set up around the church grounds. Jema explained that this is fully legal, those attending will need to book and there will be a one-way system in place.

PCC members were asked to reflect on the three options on resuming gathered worship that had been proposed in the pre-circulated paper. These options were spelled out with many underlying issues in a pre-circulated document. The three options can be summarised as follows.

Option 1: From March 21st Sunday services will be both online and onsite and midweek gathered worship can resume.

Option 2: From March 22nd a gathered midweek communion service would be offered but wait until April 18th to have onsite worship on Sundays.

Option 3: From April 8th all Sunday services to be both online and onsite and midweek gathered worship can resume.

PCC members then responded with a combination of their views and the views of other members of the congregation that they had sought out prior to the meeting.

It was noted that there will be a wide range of opinion on reopening and that many people will choose to remain at home and use Zoom. Nevertheless, giving people choice is a good thing. If the church is opened then people would expect to use hand gel, track and trace and maintain social distancing. Many people would prefer the more cautious April reopening date. Some people would prefer not to sit singly, and would prefer to sing out hymns at home but would take the view that offering choice is good, whilst not wishing to attend themselves. Zoom does not allow people to meet properly, people are missing out when the church is closed. Many people have responded that they are "Zoomed out" so that it is better to be in the church but that we should offer Zoom coverage too and in particular we should not put stumbling blocks in the way of any non-Christians. Whilst it is good to offer in-church services, it is clear that many people think that Covid precautionary arrangements have been good. It was noted that whilst reopening the church is lawful, it is important to check all safety guidelines. Easter is a highlight of the church year and so if the offer of choice between in-church and on-line is a big issue then Easter should be included, although safety management would need careful consideration. Some felt that keeping the church closed sends a negative signal, so giving people choice is the positive option. It was noted that some extra clarity is needed on what church reopening would entail, for example regarding a booking system and how to limit the number of attendees. Jema noted that there would be a cap on numbers and a few seats would be reserved for spontaneous attendees. She also noted that Christmas is busier than Easter. It was noted that if Covid cases rise again that we may need to respond to new government guidelines. However, it was also noted

that Covid case numbers in our locality are low and that other local churches are now reconsidering their decisions to close. It was noted that only Sundays would be covered both online and onsite options and in particular that the first three days of Holy Week would be Zoom only. The extended debate finally led to the following proposal.

Proposal The PCC should carry out a three way vote as suggested in the pre-circulated proposal from Jema.

Proposed Caroline Owen **Seconded** Julia Gwyther

Result Jema recorded the vote result over Zoom and announced that 18 PCC members had voted for option 1, 3 for option 2, and 2 for option 3. Therefore, gathered worship will resume on Sunday March 21st, and online worship via Zoom will continue to be offered as well.

Caroline Jowett-Ive asked when PCC members could let others know of the decision and Jema responded that the result is not confidential. Caroline then led the meeting in prayer to call for God's blessing on the decision and for all the necessary future planning.

5. FINANCE

To begin this section, Jema shared a short video featuring the Archdeacon Neil Warwick giving an extended thank you to churches in the diocese which had continued to give Parish Share contributions during the difficult time of the Covid pandemic.

5.1 Year End Accounts for 2020

Caroline Owen reported that a surplus of £53.7K was recorded in 2020 compared to a deficit in 2019. She noted that a total Gift Day income of £62K was a significant contributor to the surplus, which was an answer to prayer. She reported that she expects a net deficit in the 2021 accounts, but that this should be covered by the 2020 surplus.

5.2 Management Accounts

Caroline reported that the difference between income and expenditure for 2021 up to the end of February has been a deficit of £8K compared to a budgeted deficit of £13K. She noted that it is difficult to project monthly outcomes accurately further into 2021, particularly as some donors make a big one-off contribution at the start of the year. However, she noted that expenditure is currently within expectations, though there have been some small savings associated with our cleaner who is currently furloughed.

It was noted that Caroline's End of Year Accounts documents are "amazing" and that she has done a great job.

6. APCM

6.1 Practicalities

Jema noted that the APCM would be held on May 9th both on Zoom and on-site. She anticipated a better experience than the last APCM, which was also held both on-line and

on-site, as a result of learning from experience. There will be one service at 10am that morning, followed by the APCM at 11.30am. Up to 80 people will be allowed to attend in person and a booking system will be used.

6.2 Re-election of Treasurer at APCM

Jema acknowledged that past tradition at St. Mary's has been to allow only two successive terms of three years' membership on the PCC. However, she expressed the wish to make an exception for Caroline Owen who is our current Treasurer and Safeguarding Officer. Jema noted that Caroline would be hard to replace as treasurer at this time. This statement led to the following proposal.

Proposal Caroline Owen should be allowed to stand for re-election as a PCC member for a third term of three years at the next APCM.

Proposed Ann Thomas

Seconded Pauline Pearson

Result This proposal was accepted unanimously bar one necessary abstention.

6.3 Electoral Roll

Jema reported that Jenny Baker is standing down as Electoral Roll Officer after more than 20 years' service in the role. Jema paid tribute to the "incredible job" that Jenny has done over many years and then Jenny was applauded vigorously by the whole PCC. Jema reported that the keeping of the electoral roll would be done by office staff after the APCM and that one of our office team would formally stand for election as Electoral Roll Officer at the APCM. Jenny reported that she will put the existing electoral roll list up in the church for people to edit during early April.

7. PROPOSALS AND UPDATES

7.1 Defibrillator Installation

Wendy Hughes had been approached (by a local defibrillator enthusiast) to ask that the church consider installing a defibrillator within the church grounds and had prepared a detailed proposal document which had been pre-circulated to PCC members. The document reported the church as a good location because the nearest other available defibrillator is the one outside Salvatore's barbers' shop on Druid Hill. Wendy reported that it would cost the church about £1,000 to install a defibrillator. She also noted that heart attack survival rates improve from about 1 in 10 to about 3 in 10 if a defibrillator is readily available.

It was noted in the resulting discussion that installation might not be practical as there needs to be someone on hand to operate the device and the church is not near a centre of high population density like a block of flats. It was noted that defibrillators are fairly straightforward to use and that there are many elderly people using the church, so a location on the church office side of the church would be sensible. It was also mentioned that defibrillators do get used in practice and can be fetched in a timely manner if fairly close. Wendy noted that some installations are done in locations like disused phone boxes, but that installation by the church would mean that the device would always be charged up from the church electrical supply. Jema advised that there is a church fund for the elderly from which some money could come towards the installation costs. It was noted that walking from the church, with a defibrillator, to the location of a needy person might not be practical. Wendy noted

that those operating the defibrillator receive advice over the phone from the ambulance crew. This debate led to the following proposal.

Proposal We should continue to explore the possibility of installing a defibrillator at the church so as to be ready for a decision on funding the work at the next PCC meeting on May 12th.

Proposed Jo Morris

Seconded Jenny Baker

Result This proposal was accepted unanimously.

7.2 Transforming Church Together Conversations

Jema asked members to let her know if they intended to participate in the session on March 24th as explained in the associated pre-circulated document. Those not wanting to attend the 'facilitated conversation' for our parish can submit their views via the online survey. (see <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TCTquestionnaire>)

7.3 Living in Love and Faith

Jema noted that the Diocese of Bristol will be hosting two Saturday morning opportunities (8th and 22nd May) to hear more about "Living in Love and Faith", and encouraged PCC members to take part. (Post Meeting Note: You can book to take part here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/diocese-of-bristol-events-and-training-9201833076>)

8. STANDING ITEMS

8.1 Safeguarding

Caroline Owen stated that there is nothing significant to report. Jema assured the PCC that in the youth work that is taking place online, the Safeguarding and Social Media Policies are being closely adhered to.

8.2 Fabric

Peter had provided a detailed written report that had been distributed to members prior to the meeting. He updated the meeting on the current position by noting that replacement of the cabling for the AV system via a new trunking scheme would cost £944. This compares to use of a WiFi option now costed at £2950, which would solve the problem of trailing wires. Without action two monitor sockets cannot be used. However, further thought would be necessary to evaluate how either option would best fit into a longer-term strategy.

Peter reported that the PRW firm has suggested that the only way they could check where the problem with the window lighting circuit is would be to dig out the wiring beneath each window which would be destructive of the decoration and costly. He recommended taking no action as solving the water penetration near the display cabinet might solve the problem. With regard to the failed halide light in the north aisle, Peter reported that PRW state they cannot obtain spare parts. Peter advised seeking a cheaper local alternative repair if at all possible.

Peter advised that some voluntary maintenance work would be helpful. He noted that the south porch is in a poor state as a result of keeping the doors open and might need

commercial contractors to be engaged. Peter advised that there is also a need to make good around the display case.

Jema noted her appreciation of Peter's efforts on church fabric issues.

8.3 Youth, Children and Families ministry update

Jema noted that a detailed and encouraging report had been pre-circulated to members. Hayley reported that she was having fun working out what can be done given current restrictions.

8.4 Mission Committee

Caroline Jowett-Ive reported that Peter Robottom, John Gwyther and Angela Cattell wished to continue as committee members but that she would like some PCC members to attend as well. Caroline noted that reconstituting the committee had been slowed by the Covid pandemic.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Pauline Pearson raised the question as to whether Keith Sheather should be allowed to restart filming in the church. He wants to start again soon to take advantage of dark evenings. It was noted that given the earlier decision on church re-opening that Keith might restart after March 21st. Jema noted that Keith is competent at observing Covid restrictions. However, other PCC members pointed out that as yet people are not allowed to mix indoors except for specific 'exempt' activities (e.g. gathered worship). Filming could therefore be seen as an illegal activity and not something that the PCC could endorse. This led to the following proposal.

Proposal The PCC authorises Keith Sheather to begin filming in the church when the Government permits people to gather indoors, which is currently likely to be after May 17th (for groups of up to six).

Proposed Wendy Hughes

Seconded Ben Notley

Result This proposal was accepted unanimously bar one abstention.

Action Caroline Jowett-Ive to contact Keith Sheather to explain that filming cannot resume until May 17th at the earliest.

10. CLOSING PRAYER

Simon Potter closed the meeting in prayer at 9:30pm.

Signed.......... Date.....16/05/21.....

The date of the next scheduled PCC meeting is Wednesday 12th May 2021. The APCM is planned for Sunday 9th May at 11.30am.