

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church of St Peter and St Paul's Church, Aylesford held on Saturday 24th October 2020 at 10.30am held in the Church and by Zoom

Present: Revd Ruth Peet chaired the meeting. 16 parishioners attended in the Church and 10 attended via Zoom.

1. Welcome and Prayer

Ruth thanked everyone for attending and opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies for absence

Aline Ongley, Bob and Joy Halliday, Daphne Card, Sarah and Joe Crowe, Ann & Geoff Game, Peter Smith.

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS (VESTRY MEETING)

3. Elections of Church Wardens

Ruth advised that Alan Longmuir and Aline Ongley were both willing to stand again and had been individually proposed and seconded.

Aline had been proposed by Alan Longmuir, seconded by Gordon Hunt.

Alan had been proposed by Ann Beale, seconded by Aline Ongley.

All those parishioners present in Church and by Zoom agreed.

Ruth thanked both Alan and Aline for all their hard work as Churchwardens and for their willingness to continue.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The Annual Report, Draft Minutes of the previous APCM, Statement of Financial Accounts and Reports from Committees and other Groups for 2019 had previously been circulated and were taken as read.

4. Approval of Draft Minutes of the APCM held on Sunday 14th April, 2019

There were no amendments to be made and it was agreed by all parishioners attending in Church and by Zoom that they were a true record of the meeting. Ruth asked for any matters arising from these minutes to be brought up under Any Other Business.

5. Report on the numbers entered on the new Electoral Roll.

Anita reported that we have 113 people on the Electoral Roll as of 6th October (on completion of the revision prior to the delayed 2020 APCM). 58 are residents and 55 are non-residents. Since the publishing of the Electoral Roll on the 30th March 2019, 3 people have been removed and 9 people added.

Thanks to Steven Kyle our previous Electoral Roll Officer, who has resigned, for his work during his term of office. Anita Keays had already been appointed Electoral Roll Officer by the PCC.

6. Parish Annual Report and Vicar's comments.

(a) There were no comments on the Annual Report

(b) The Vicar's update on her Annual Report is attached.

Andy Brown and Annette Nobes thanked Ruth.

7. PCC Accounts and Financial Report

The Finance Report had already been incorporated in the Annual Report for 2020.

Alan advised that there had obviously been an extraordinary change in our finances this year. He thinks that we could just about break even at the end of the year mainly due to generous donations amounting to £9,000 and the Brassey Trust's decision not to charge the £5,000 rent for 2020.

It will be difficult to provide a draft budget for 2021, but is hoping that a Stewardship Campaign next year will help.

Alan wished to thank the Finance Team and Ruth for all their help during this difficult time. He asked if anyone had any questions but there were none.

8. Fabric Goods and Ornaments

Bob sent his apologies for not being at the meeting. The Fabric Report had already been incorporated in the Annual Report for 2019.

Gordon Hunt thanked Bob and the Fabric Committee for all the hard work entailed in planning the work that has to be carried out for the fabric of the church. Ruth seconded these thanks.

9. Deanery Synod Report and Election

The Deanery Synod Report had already been incorporated in the Annual Report for 2020. Gordon advised there are usually 3 meetings each year, but unfortunately due to circumstances there had only been two meetings this year. The meetings usually discuss how churches are coping and provides a useful forum to discuss important issues.

10. Election of Deanery Synod members

The three year term for members of the Deanery Synod ended this year and Ruth proposed that Gordon Hunt and Ian Packer be our representatives for the next three years. All those parishioners present in Church and by Zoom agreed.

Ruth thanked Alan who was stepping down this year, for his time and help during the past years he has been on the Deanery Synod

11. Election of members to the PCC

Ruth advised that as there are 100 members on the electoral Roll for 2020 we can elect 12 members on to the PCC. These are divided into three groups, each with four members, who all serve a three year term. This year the 3 yr term ends for Gordon Hunt, Janet Holdstock, Ann Beale, and Bob Halliday.

Gordon, Janet and Ann are all willing to stand again had been individually nominated. Bob Halliday has sadly resigned from the PCC, but he will continue on the Fabric Committee. Sue Gallico has been nominated in his place.

Ruth thanked Bob for his work as a PCC member.

Gordon Hunt has been proposed by Gordon Salden and seconded by Janet Holdstock

Janet Holdstock has been proposed by Ann Beale and seconded by Aline Ongley

Ann Beale has been proposed by Davina Longmuir and seconded Aline Ongley

Sue Gallico has been proposed by Gordon Hunt and seconded by Janet Holdstock

All those parishioners in Church and by Zoom agreed.

Ruth welcomed Sue Gallico as a new member.

Charlie Bunker resigned in January 2020 and Ian Packer was nominated to take his place at a PCC meeting in January 2020 and his term ends 2021.

12. Election of Sidespeople

Ruth advised that from this year all Sidespeople will be appointed at the first full meeting of the PCC after the APCM.

13. Election of Independent Examiner

Alan recommended that we keep Martyn Burt, who has audited our Accounts for the last three years, as our Independent Examiner.

Gordon Hunt proposed, Sue Gallico seconded and all those parishioners in Church and by Zoom agreed.

Ruth would like to record her thanks to Martyn.

14. Any Other Business.

(a) Draft Minutes of last APCM - There were no matters arising.

(b) There were no comments to be recorded with regard to the Other Group Reports.

(c) Alan said he would like to thank Ruth formally for all her hard work over the past two years and for her love of this parish, with no official help, as some other churches who have curates and laypeople to assist. Everyone agreed wholeheartedly.

Ruth thanked everyone for their help and support as well.

Andy thanked Ruth and everyone else for the support he has had through Covid.

15. Date, time and place of next AMP and APCM

This will take place on Sunday, 2nd May, 2021 at 11.30 after the morning service.

Review of the Year and Vicar's Report – Revd Ruth Peet

Additional Comments – APCM – 24th October 2020

These comments are in addition to the report you will already have seen.

The report I wrote ready for the original date of the APCM showed what I think can be described as a gain in momentum.

We had begun to strengthen the prayer life of the church, and most likely because of that, other things were happening.

In a nutshell, we agreed to work towards better communication, church growth and improved income, balancing – careful, responsible money management alongside warmth, generosity and love for all around us, and we found that church attendance grew during the year (2019) and we saw an improvement in our finances, in that regular giving increased to the point where the predicted overall deficit greatly decreased, so much so that we agreed to offer the full amount requested for the 2020 Diocesan Common Fund. Our efforts in communication were enhanced by a new website and an ever-increasing number of Facebook followers.

There were a number of initiatives and events throughout the year – Thy Kingdom Come (when we filled the church with prayer stations), the Plastic Project (when we filled the church with our rubbish) and Lights of Love (when we filled the church with beautiful trees and memories) are examples of things that were making connections with those around us.

We also kept the church open more often and people appreciated that.

And then we supported Charlie, Emma and Jane in starting training for ministry, and five people were confirmed.

Not everything worked well – Sunday Club for example failed to attract new families – through no fault of any of the leaders. It's obviously not the right thing for here, and the new FCYP Committee will be looking imaginatively at other ideas (starting next week!).

But we started 2020 with high hopes – we ran Christianity Explored, which was great, we had a thoroughly enjoyed wedding event for the 2020 couples and we were heading towards linking all our ideas into the Diocesan 'Called Together' initiative, beginning with a planning day to involve the wider community.

And then ... well we know what happened ...

But – the way we have continued together as a church – a true church – the people, not the building, has been astonishing. We took to Zoom worship like ducks to water, through a bigger group of Pastoral Contacts we've kept in touch with around 100 isolated people, we've met online for prayer nearly every day, and we've set up a Food Table in the RBLI village. We've also not forgotten those with no internet access – we've done our best to keep in touch with them. I think we learned so much about a church that is not just on Sunday mornings. And once the building could open again we did everything possible to create a safe environment. It seems to have worked. Numbers aren't everything but there were 66 people

attending church last Sunday, in here or by Zoom.

The finances took a terrible hit as I'm sure Alan will give more detail about in a moment, but we rallied and thanks to the generosity of so many, things are looking a lot better than they might have been.

I just want to say that I've been so impressed by everyone's helpful, positive and common sense approach to all the issues. We have just taken everything step by step without making the fuss that I've heard about in some other churches and I am so thankful to you for that.

Things might seem like they're never going to get 'back to normal' – and maybe they won't for a good while, but on the basis of such a positive approach we're going to be able to continue to progress some of our ideas – a weekend of remembering, an Advent programme over Zoom, the food table becoming a permanent food shed and maybe even a community hub.

And in all this, we are able to gather weekly in our beautiful spiritual home, to worship God, to bring our prayers and concerns, to care for each other and to leave here re-energised for his work in the world.

Talking about work, I did make a comment about my own workload in the report – crazy job that this is. I still feel the same – too much work, not enough play – but I am still not unhappy – and another thank you I have for you is thank you for your understanding of the nature of my role – in that there are times when I simply can't do everything you wish I could – or I wish I could! It would be a lot harder without your generous spirit in that regard.

And a third thank you ... and I'll finish with this - by repeating my last paragraph in the report ...

There are many, many people who contribute to the life of the church, on both paid and voluntary bases, and I would like to express my gratitude to each and every one. I hesitate to mention anyone by name, because as soon as I do I will have to name many more. The church simply could not thrive without the huge voluntary workload undertaken, which is so greatly appreciated.