

The Parochial Church Council of the Parish of Marcham with Garford

Minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held on Wednesday 23 Sept 2020

Held on ZOOM

Present

Bryan Eccles (BE)

Mark Newman (MN)

Pamela Carter Moore (PCM)

Neil Rowe (NR)

Tamsin Gilbert (TG)

| Item | | Action |
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| 1. | <p>Welcome and opening prayer MN opened the meeting in prayer. Apologies were noted from Ruth Atkins (RA)</p> | |
| 2. | <p>Approval of minutes from last meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 were approved as an accurate record.</p> | |
| 3. | <p>Matters arising MN had looked into the minutes of the mission partners but could find no reference to an electronic newsstand. We noted the importance for both PCC and mission partner meetings of accurately minuting decisions, particularly financial ones.</p> | |
| 4. | <p>COVID-19 related issues – Evening services in the building have gone smoothly. Average attendance of 15. Morning services restarted on 20th September with live streaming (26 adults, 15 children) – will need a review after a couple of weeks. The sound on the live stream was not very good and Cathie Little (who was watching) made some good comments to help improve the experience for those at home, including making sure that the camera shows area of the dais etc regularly. The use of the phone by the leader to connect with those at home was appreciated. It would still be possible to have coffee over Zoom after the service if a volunteer was willing to take it on. People are getting tired of Zoom meetings and the ‘rule of 6’ makes home groups or any other church group meeting in person tricky. Home groups and others have been asked for their thoughts. Need to think creatively about Remembrance and Christmas services – a few ideas were shared. TG, MN and Rosemary Siebert will be attending a webinar on Remembering tomorrow.</p> | |
| 5. | <p>Finance update BE and CL had been working on the accounts and were up to date to July. They will have August done soon too.</p> | BE |

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| | <p>The bank balance remains fairly static, but BE did note that over the past few months we have been losing approx. £500 pcm of regular donations; £130 COVID-related, but the rest is because people have moved on. It is something we should probably be slightly concerned about. The difference in donations between Jan -Aug 2019 and Jan-Aug 2020 is about £9000 which is significant.</p> <p>TG commented that we need to find a way to gently ask people to review their giving without applying any pressure or making them feel guilty at this difficult time.</p> <p>CL and BE are going to start the budget soon – NR suggested a three year projected budget and BE said that this was something he’d like to work towards.</p> <p>BE had attended a deanery treasurer meeting – they were warned that many churches are going to start to seriously struggle as a result of decreased income due to Covid pandemic. The deanery are planning to write to those churches with healthy bank balances to see if they would help those which are struggling. We will need to be thoughtful and prayerful in our response to this.</p> <p>In June the PCC decided not to increase the salaries of Rob and Jill and review it later in the year. After discussion, the SC would like to propose to the PCC that we do not increase them now either but wait until the New Year to review again. This would be in keeping with what is happening in many businesses and the situation for many clergy. Anyone who would like to object to this should contact NR or TG before the next SC meeting.</p> | ALL PCC |
| 6. | <p>Fabric update</p> <p>There is a need to install landline in the church office. TG will liaise with the AV team about required capacity of modem before agreeing any new contract. The contracts TG is looking at seem cheaper than our current one.</p> <p>We need to cancel our Microsoft subscription (which is a family one) and sign up for a charity or business account. This has budgetary implications (though not huge). We can register with Microsoft non-profits in order to get special charity offers for this. TG has done the registration and will await the response from Microsoft. Again, the alternative seems to be cheaper.</p> <p>We have been liaising with the parish council about repairing the path and driveway (using the same materials). They are seeking quotes and we have also spoken to our architect and a contractor he knows about the options. We have suggested that the church might be willing to contribute to creating a soakaway in the drive to help prevent the drive washing away, but will wait for quotes to come back before we go any further.</p> <p>NR would like to apply to the parish council for a grant to service the clock at All Saints. We need to chase the architect up who was going to get us a quote.</p> <p>PCM updated us on further news from St Lukes: A group of about 15 people have come together to form the ‘Friends of St Lukes’ in order to care for the church and support Debbie Flint. Since forming, they have given the church and churchyard a really good tidy up. The curtain over the North door has been taken down, cleaned and</p> | <p>TG</p> <p>TG</p> <p>TG/NR</p> <p>NR</p> |

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| | <p>repaired and looks amazing. The draft excluders have been replaced. Redundant organs have been removed and the heaters are now all up and running well. (Tony Carter has the details of the heaters from Malcolm Denton and information about how to obtain the spare parts if needed again). They have been offered a possible new electric organ by Ben Skipp which should be fine to accept as it is a movable object. Their next jobs are to replace the vestry curtains (PCM will show TG samples of fabric and then supply the SC with costing for approval).</p> <p>St. Lukes would like to have the interior of the church repainted. The architect is able to write a specification and suggest the right kind of paint (we have two large tubs in All Saints of the right kind) but it would need a faculty. In terms of organising repainting the interior, PCM will obtain two quotes and TG will obtain one to put to the PCC before applying for a faculty.</p> | TG/ PCM |
| 7. | <p>Pastoral Reorganisation – this is on the agenda for the deanery synod meeting on the 24th September.</p> | |
| 8. | <p>Parish Profile – this has been through another edit that is attached. This will be discussed in depth at an away day – planning this for Saturdays 3rd & 17th October. PCM commented that it would be good to change some of the language to show St Lukes in a more positive light. The FOSL could be mentioned as well as many of the events that happen in the village (Harvest suppers, Christmas meals, carols. The SC commented that more information about StL could be contained in an appendix and on the website.</p> | |
| 9. | <p>Youth update (From Rob) - <i>During lockdown, youth activities consisted of a Sunday evening Zoom session. These were reasonably well attended and supported by our adult team of volunteers. By the Summer holidays, fatigue had set in with this medium. Given new relaxations in guidelines (youth activities fall under certain education guidelines and the National Youth Agency produce industry specific guidelines on how to conduct sessions), new options were available. Over the Summer, Youth activates consisted of appropriately distanced (and risk assessed) sessions in the churchyard and released video content on YouTube, on alternating weeks. Currently we are continuing this pattern of alternating 3pm Sunday physical meetings and Sunday video content, with a view to review this after half-term. Currently the guidelines allow for an inside youth meeting of upto 15 people (appropriately distanced etc.), I am currently completing a risk assessment plan for this, for warden-approval, which will allow us to conduct our Sunday youth sessions in the church building, once the weather no longer supports outside working.</i></p> <p><i>Longer term, we are looking at what virtual mediums can be used (within Safeguarding regulations) to allow contact with our young people, rather than emails through parents to try and engender a greater sense of connectivity. Our issues surround the age restrictions on certain apps and Safeguarding robustness. But hopefully, we can identify something suitable and trial it during this Autumn term.</i></p> <p><i>What Sunday morning Youth looks like will depend on how guidelines develop, but currently it is suspended.</i></p> | |

