

PCC MINUTES FOR THE PARISH OF ST MICHAEL'S PLAS NEWTON, CHESTER

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21 September 2020 via Zoom

Present	Peter Rugen (Chair)	John Stockdale
	Ruth McKew	Andy Thorne
	Steve McKew	Gill Miller
	David Blackmore	Sarah Batchelor
	John Allan	Stu Davies
	Martin Smith	Sas McConville
	Magdy Fahmy	Rob Kophamel
	Derek Taylor	Fiona Prichard (Secretary)
	Ali Gibbons	
	Peter Webster	
	Anne de Reybekill	Apologies
	Anne Stockdale	Estelle Byrne
	Ken Ball	
	Phil Roberts	

Ref	Item	Notes	Action (what)	Who and by when
	Welcome and Prayer	Pete welcomed everyone to the meeting. He opened the meeting with a reading from Psalm 119 from Verse 57. He followed the reading with a prayer.		
	Minutes from June Meeting	No amendments were required to be made to the minutes from the previous PCC meeting. The approval of the minutes was proposed by Gill Miller and seconded by Sarah Batchelor and the minutes were approved by all present.		
	Matters Arising	<p>Following the last meeting Andy Thorne had sent an email to all those who had booked to go on this year's House Party giving them an option to either carry their deposit on to next year's House Party (a provisional booking for which has been made), or donate their deposit to Cloverley Hall or have their deposit repaid.</p> <p>It was also noted that since the last meeting there was still nothing on the main Church Notice Board about the Services. Pete said that communication was a topic later in the meeting and that could be discussed then.</p>		



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2045	Finance Report	<p>John Allan explained that the Accounts should have been approved in March in time for when the APCM should have been held in April but that the Covid-19 Crisis had delayed their finalisation. He had now received the Accounts and wanted them to be approved by the PCC so that he could submit them to the Charity Commission. He said that there was a loss of £25,000 to £26,000 but this had been anticipated.</p> <p>A query was raised as to why there was an increase in Non Gift Aid Donations in 2019 and John explained that this was due to the legacy which had been received which was not eligible for Gift Aid. It was suggested that in future legacies were shown separately but it was pointed out that legacies are rarely received.</p> <p>A concern was raised as to whether the Annual Report and Accounts could be seen by the congregation in these present times and Pete said that there was a notice on the Notice Sheet advising members of the church that copies were available by email.</p> <p>Approval of the Accounts was proposed by John A and seconded by Sas M and the Accounts were approved by all present.</p> <p>John A then presented a finance report for the present year up to June 2020. There was a surplus at this stage of £4,000 to £5000 and that was net of the Gift Aid which would bring the surplus up to £11,000 or £12,000. The surplus was partly due to the grants which had been received by Kings Way and also due to salary savings thanks to the Government Furlough scheme. Giving has stayed strong during the year and the tax efficient giving is higher than expected. A loss is anticipated by the end of the year but not as great a loss as initially expected. However, John warned that next year is likely to be very challenging.</p> <p>A comment was made that a giving campaign had been proposed before the pandemic to try and increase giving so that the cost of two youth workers was covered. However, Pete said that he felt it was not appropriate in the present circumstances to have a giving campaign.</p>		



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		<p>Concern was raised for the church finances going forward as the benefits we have had (eg the grants) will not necessarily be available next year and it was also noted that there have been fuel savings and little maintenance has been carried out on the church centre this year. John Allan said that he felt that we had been given a reprieve this year and that this would give us more time to plan for the coming years when the financial situation may be more challenging.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Mission Fund payments which are normally made in November be made now as all charities were suffering due to the crisis. Anne S said she would propose that to the Mission Committee.</p>	Mission Committee to be consulted	Anne S
2046	Staffing Update	<p>Pete confirmed that Fiona would be retiring from the role of Bookkeeper at the end of the month. Pete thanked Fiona and asked for an update on how the handover to Dave Hollins was progressing. Fiona said that it was progressing well but there was a lot for Dave to learn. She confirmed that she would continue to help with queries from Dave after she had finished.</p> <p>He said that Sas was now working two days a week having been furloughed from April to August.</p> <p>Pete also said that Sarah Batchelor, who had started training for ordination, would be included as staff so that she could learn about the management of a church.</p>		



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2047	Letting	<p>Pete explained that the AA Group had been letting space in the Church Centre for their meetings as it was felt that it was beneficial to their mental health to allow them to continue. The group uses special chairs and carries out a deep clean after each use of the hall.</p> <p>Pete now wanted to know what PCC members felt about others using the hall. All the groups who had previously let the hall (eg Scouts) had decided not to meet and all the enquiries they had received had been from new groups. Pete said his own feeling was that use by others could disrupt our own plans to hold events as either the hall would have to be left for 72 hours or a deep clean would have to occur after each use. It was agreed that we should proceed with caution and not take any bookings for the moment. The situation could be re-evaluated in the New Year.</p>	Lettings Co-ordinator to be advised of situation	Pete
2048	Ministry	<p>Sunday Service - Pete said that the 9.00 am Prayer Service on Sundays had gone very well and people appeared to value and enjoy it. It would move to a 10.00 am slot in October and would develop as the regulations permitted. It is now being live streamed and a recording could also be seen on the website following the service.</p> <p>A suggestion was made that more people were used in the service and Pete said that this had been planned but initially it had been easier to use fewer people whilst the technological issues were solved. It was acknowledged that Rob and Stu had done a huge amount of work to facilitate the live streamed service and their efforts were greatly appreciated.</p> <p>Pete said he planned to hold an occasional evening service in October depending on the regulations.</p> <p>A query was raised as to when Holy Communion would be offered but Pete said he was not comfortable with the Church of England regulations at the moment and also felt that there was a risk involved as more moving around would be required as people came up to receive communion.</p> <p>Streams – Pete said that he planned to start some Stream groups in October. There would be four groups in various rooms in the church. He said that rule of 6 people did not apply when people were meeting for worship or education. He did not anticipate that there would be lots of people</p>		



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		<p>wanting to join the streams as people were still nervous about going out.</p> <p>A query was raised as to whether home groups could continue on Zoom. Pete said this was a possibility and that the streams could be a hybrid with two groups in church and two on Zoom.</p> <p>A concern was raised that the local community may not understand why the rule of 6 does not apply to the church. Pete agreed that we needed to be sensitive to that but that we also needed to do what we were permitted to do under the regulations.</p> <p>A suggestion was raised that an event be arranged to celebrate Advent. Pete said that he had already booked the Archdeacon to run an Advent Course. The Archdeacon had advised that the church should do as much as normal as possible.</p> <p>It was agreed that church events should continue on Zoom until the Advent Course run by the Archdeacon.</p> <p>Remembrance/Harvest - Pete said that he was hoping that these events could be marked but they may not be able to be done in the same way as in the past.</p> <p>Christmas – Pete said that creative ways would have to be thought of to how to mark the usual Christmas services (eg Christingle). There would be no carol service and the service on Christmas Day may have to be by ticket only.</p>		
2049	Children & Youth Update	<p>Sas gave an update on the Children and Families' Work. She had returned from being furloughed at the beginning of September and was only working two days a week. She said that she felt things were encouraging. She outlined her attempts for outreach in the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She had re-connected with three local schools and had received a very positive response from them. She felt there was a collaboration there with the combined aim to support the children. • She was going back into Newton School and had also been talking to schools about live streaming church to homes. • Open the Book was on hold for the moment. 		



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Tykes was on hold until January. • Ruth (Richards) and Sas had some exciting ideas for events in the café with mums. They are planning a Monday afternoon meeting for a “New Mums” meet up in the café. • She hoped that Christmas would be an opportunity for a combined project with the Hub and local schools/Kings Way shops. <p>Sas said that she had tried to get along side as many people as she could. Through this contact she had discovered that people’s mental health had suffered due to the pandemic crisis and she felt out of her depth in knowing how to help. It was agreed that there might be an opportunity for the church to try and help those who were suffering. Pete suggested that one of the lessons from the Covid crisis is that you need to engage with people where they are and not just in church.</p> <p>Sas also outlined how she was hoping to offer support to church members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She was planning a Plan A, B and C for a Sunday provision but was still very unsure what this would look like. • She was intending to develop online videos and activities for kids. • 226 to possibly begin in person or online. • She intended to provide one to one support for families. • She wanted to connect young and old within the church family, through the services and content online. • She intended to start a WhatsApp Group for mums of children at St Michael’s. <p>Sas also said that she is going to do a course called How to Make the Most of a Covid Christmas which is online and she is attending a Playtime National Conference (run by Care for the Family) and a Transforming Lives Together training regarding holiday club provision/lunches. She is also meeting Jonny Masters, the Children’s Diocesan Missioner.</p>		



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		<p>Rob gave an update on the Youth Work. He had met with the Youth Leaders for a chat a few weeks ago. They had sent out a form to the young people for feedback. They had been doing a hybrid of Zoom meetings and meetings in person. On Wednesday the older group are having a meet up and on Friday the younger group are meeting.</p> <p>Rob had met with CSCW and MCYC regarding summer camps and they were hoping to hold a Growing Young Leaders' Course.</p> <p>He said he wanted to see young people getting more involved in the service as, from the feedback form, none of the young people was continuing with the services.</p> <p>He had contacted Upton High but they are very reluctant to have anyone going into school at the moment. He had, therefore, contacted Emma from All Saints and they were planning to produce some videos which could be sent into the school to provide support for the young people.</p> <p>Rob was in contact with student connect for Chester University.</p> <p>Rob would like to equip parents better so that they can talk about faith at home.</p> <p>Pete reminded members of the PCC that Rob's work was on top of all his help with putting services on line and streaming the services on Sunday. He thanked them both for all their hard work. Sas and Rob were asked if there was anything they would like more in the way of help and they both said continued prayer.</p> <p>There was a consensus in the Zoom chat that St Michael's is very blessed to have Sas and Rob and they are greatly appreciated.</p>		



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2050	Vicar's Slot	<p>Pete said that he was very aware that communication by the church was not as good as it could be and he reassured the meeting that the issue was very much on the front burner. He was aware that the notice board needed to be updated and he was considering restarting the magazine. He said that social media was very successful for some people as a way of communicating.</p> <p>He felt that the Covid crisis had provided an opportunity to decide what was important and we needed to decide who we are, what we do and how to serve. Pete added that he may try to reorganise the sub committees involved in running the church to try to better represent people.</p> <p>A comment was made that communication could be improved regarding reaching the local community and reminding it what we do and what we stand for. It was suggested that leaflets could be issued. A comment was also made regarding communicating the PCC minutes to the congregation although Pete said that the minutes need to be approved by the PCC before they can be circulated to the rest of the church members.</p> <p>A suggestion was made to launch an Alpha course via Zoom. Pete said that he had already intended to do this.</p> <p>Thanks were given on the chat to Pete for guiding us particularly in these difficult times.</p>		
2051	Café Update	<p>Pete gave an update on the café and said that Ruth was awaiting a Perspex screen. He said that Peter Webster and Rod Pirie had been very helpful in making the café suitable from a Health and Safety point of view.</p> <p>Pete said that Ruth was full of enthusiasm and it is a shame that the pandemic has meant that she cannot bring all her ideas to fruition. He explained that she is struggling to get volunteers to work in the café and said that he would welcome anyone present who wished to help out.</p> <p>At the moment people are still sitting outside and a takeaway service is being provided. One idea, if sufficient volunteers cannot be found, is to open some days for take away and some days as a sit in café.</p>		



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		<p>Improvements have been made to the decor and Pete said that Les Austin and Mick Byrne had been very helpful in achieving this.</p>		
2052	APCM	<p>Pete said that his preference was for an APCM via Zoom and this would be held on Monday, 19th October. A hybrid might also be offered where a couple of laptops would be available at church for anyone who did not have the technology at home.</p> <p>He added that the APCM should be as short a meeting as possible although it was suggested that people in the church must be given a chance to air their views.</p> <p>Pete said that Peter W, Ali and Phil all wished to stand again for re-election and so there were 3 vacancies for new PCC Members. He also said that Derek would be stepping down as Warden but that Steve would be continuing for one more year. Derek said that his time as Warden had been good but challenging and he had every confidence in Steve and the new Warden, whoever that might be, continuing successfully. Pete said he was in consultation with a couple of people regarding the possibility of taking on the role.</p> <p>Pete explained that the Deanery Synod Representatives also needed to be elected although the existing Representatives would stay on until the end of December.</p> <p>Pete suggested that future PCC Meetings be conducted via Zoom even once the restrictions were lifted or Zoom Meetings could be alternated with meeting in person.</p> <p>Pete asked whether the APCM should start at 7.30pm or 8.00pm. He put it to the vote and 7 were for a 7.30pm start and 5 were for an 8.00pm start. It was agreed that the APCM would start at 7.30pm.</p>		



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	Prayer	The meeting closed with saying the Grace.		
	Next Meeting	APCM on Monday, 19 October 2020 at 7.30pm via Zoom, followed by a short PCC Meeting to elect officers. November PCC Meeting on Monday, 16 November at 8.00pm via Zoom.		

