

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

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18 January 2021- via Zoom

<b>Present</b>	Peter Rugen (Chair)	John Stockdale
	Ruth McKew	Andy Thorne
	Steve McKew	Gill Miller
	David Blackmore	Stu Davies
	John Allan	Andrew Davies
	Martin Smith	Fiona Prichard (Secretary)
	Magdy Fahmy	
	Steve Powell	
	Ali Gibbons	
	Peter Webster	
	Anne de Reybekill	<b>Apologies</b>
	Anne Stockdale	Estelle Byrne
	Ken Ball	
	Phil Roberts	

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	<b>Welcome and Prayer</b>	Pete welcomed everyone to the meeting. He then opened the meeting with a reading from Mark, Chapter 2, Verses 18-22. He followed the reading with a prayer.		
	<b>Minutes from November Meeting</b>	No amendments were required to be made to the minutes from the November PCC meeting.  Approval of the minutes was proposed by Gill Miller and seconded by Anne De Reybekill and the minutes were approved by all present.		
	<b>Matters Arising</b>	Christmas CDs - Pete said that 200 Christmas CDs had been ordered and distributed before Christmas and the CDs had been well received. He said that some members of church had taken them and used them to share with neighbours whilst other CDs had been given to vulnerable members of the Parish (who had received meals during the first lockdown). Others had been taken to Kingswood. Pete suggested that we might want to think about doing a similar thing next Christmas.  Operation Christmas Child – Pete said that he had emailed Dave Ash to advise him that the church would no longer be supporting the charity. A reply had been received from Dave who was, understandably, disappointed about the decision.		



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2059	<b>Christmas Review</b>	<p>Pete thanked everyone who had been involved in the Christmas services.</p> <p>He went on to outline some of the Christmas events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mike Gilbertson, the Archdeacon, had run an advent course on Zoom which had been attended by about 50 people.</li> <li>• Mill View School had sent a year group at a time to record a song in church and then the school had shown the recordings on a School Christmas Zoom, together with an introductory talk by Pete. Ali Gibbons, a teacher at the school, commented that the input by Pete, Sas and Rob had been much appreciated as it provided a little bit of “normality” and Pete was now regarded as a member of the school community.</li> <li>• Quite a few church members had sung carols with their neighbours and Pete suggested that this might be worth continuing even after the pandemic was over.</li> <li>• The carol services on Zoom had had a good response.</li> <li>• As it had not been possible to hold a Christingle Service, Christingle items plus a chocolate orange had been sent out to about 80 families and the families directed to the national Christingle event.</li> </ul> <p>Pete said that the decision not to hold a service in church on Christmas Day had been an extremely difficult one. He said that a large percentage of people intending to go to the service had been vulnerable and he did not want to put them at risk. He had called each person to explain his decision and many people had been grateful that the decision had been made for them.</p> <p>Pete invited comments on the decision and a discussion ensued. Some of the views expressed were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was queried whether it was right to not hold the service when churches had been told they could hold services.</li> </ul>		



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was queried whether it was right that Pete should take the responsibility for making that decision as it was stressful for him having to make it.</li> <li>• It was argued that it might have been better for people to make up their own minds.</li> </ul> <p>In response to these comments such views were expressed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was a good call not hold the service.</li> <li>• The church has a duty of care and a responsibility to keep safe those who attend church and those who help with the services and this could not have been guaranteed, especially with the virulence of the new strain of Covid.</li> <li>• Although there would have been benefits to those attending (eg to mental health) the other considerations outweighed these.</li> </ul> <p>Pete invited comments generally on the Christmas events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comment was made that special thanks should go to Rob Kophamel for his technical input.</li> <li>• It was suggested that we need clear guidance and a decision framework to decide whether we hold future services.</li> <li>• There had been some benefits to the Zoom format of services as the carol service had been watched in France and Ella Cutting's performance of Come All Ye Unfaithful had had thousands of views on Facebook and subsequently Ella had been invited on Radio Merseyside on Christmas Day.</li> </ul>		
2060	<b>Finance Report</b>	Phil Roberts had circulated a Finance Report prior to the meeting and he had responded to comments from PCC Members via email. The document had outlined proposals to update the Accounting Software, change the provider for the Church and Café telephones, change to a buy not lease policy, to terminate the present agreement with the photocopier provider and to buy a photocopier instead. In the document, he also gave a pre-audit preliminary view on the 2020 accounts and gave some information on the 2021 accounts.		



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		<p>1. <b>Accounting Software</b> – Phil proposed upgrading the Accounting Software to the Data Developments MyFundAccount.online. The proposal was seconded by Steve McKew. The choice of package was queried but Phil explained that the Data Developments software is particularly good for Fund Accounting. There was a show of hands and all agreed to the proposal.</p> <p>2. <u>Telephones</u> – Phil proposed the early termination of the phone contract in the Café and to switch to Vodaphone for both the Church and the Café. This would save £1,100 this year and £900 in future years. He would also discontinue the special entry in the phone book which would save £250 a year. Phil’s proposal was seconded by Stu and all were in favour.</p> <p>3. <u>Photocopier</u> – Phil said that the lease finishes in a month and he proposed a move to Toshiba, a preferred buyer of Parish Buying, and to buy rather than lease a photocopier from them. A discussion ensued as to whether a photocopier is still needed. Following the discussion, the consensus of opinion was that it would be good to become a paper free office in the future but it would be too stressful for office users to insist on that move now and would take time to achieve it. In the meantime, we should accept Phil’s proposal to buy the Toshiba machine and log the users so that usage could be tracked. The proposal to buy the Toshiba photocopier was seconded by Gill Miller and all agreed.</p> <p>Pete thanked Phil for all the time he had spent on the finances and finding cheaper alternatives to our existing deals.</p>	<p>New software to be purchased and installed</p> <p>BT contracts to be terminated and switched to Vodaphone</p> <p>Contract to be terminated with B&amp;M and photocopier to be purchased from Toshiba</p>	<p>Phil</p> <p>Phil</p> <p>Phil</p>



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2061	<b>Sub-Groups</b>	<p>Steve McKew explained that the paper showing the organisation of the church had been drawn up by Pete and circulated prior to the meeting, following the discussion at November's PCC Meeting. He said that the names of the groups were not important at this stage as they could be changed subsequently. He said that he wanted people in the groups to have a real passion for the area of responsibility concerned but that the strategy regarding the operation of the groups should be set by the PCC. This would allow for the evolution of the church as PCC members would not be bound by decisions made by previous PCCs. He went on to say that the groups would have significant budgets and the PCC needed to have responsibility for how those budgets were spent.</p> <p>He invited comments from the PCC members and the following comments were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was commented that the group titles were a bit staccato and might not cover all the areas of the church's activities. However, Pete explained that not all areas (eg Children and Youth) were represented by a committee as they were answerable directly to him.</li> <li>• Concern was expressed about accountability if the Treasurer was also in charge of Audit. Pete explained that the Finance Committee would be chaired by the Treasurer but would be supported by a group of people and the Committee would be answerable to the PCC.</li> <li>• Concern was expressed that we should not wait to get the list perfect before implementing the changes.</li> </ul> <p>Steve McKew suggested that the groups meet as they are at present to discuss the Sub-Committee document and then report back to the PCC. No big decisions could be made until the PCC has signed off on the strategy of each group. Pete said he is still waiting for a couple of people to respond to him regarding the groups.</p> <p>It was pointed out that there are already constitutions in existence for the Mission Committee and the Café so it might be useful to look at those first before coming up with revised</p>		



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		<p>strategies. Pete agreed that it was sensible to do this rather than to start from scratch.</p> <p>Pete said that he would talk to Steve McKew about the groups and they would send out something giving to PCC members between now and the next meeting giving more clarity regarding the terms of reference.</p> <p>It was pointed out by Anne Stockdale that the Mission Committee had a meeting on Monday, 25 January. Pete and Steve said they would talk following the meeting to Anne to see if the meeting could be rearranged so that Steve could attend.</p>	<p>Document giving clarity on terms of reference to be drawn up and sent out prior to next meeting</p> <p>Discussion with Anne S re next Mission Committee meeting</p>	<p>Pete and Steve M</p> <p>Pete and Steve M</p>
2062	<b>Covid</b>	<p>Steve McKew suggested that, in the light of the changing situation regarding the pandemic, that Covid should be kept as a standing item on the agenda.</p> <p>A discussion ensued regarding the church's response to the situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern was raised that there is no strategy or framework for deciding when we might open the church again for services in spite of the fact that it is not against the regulations to do so.</li> <li>• It was suggested that the Church of England Committee make very well considered decisions and we should consider those decisions very carefully.</li> <li>• It was argued that the church has a duty of care to all users (staff, volunteers and members of the congregation) and has to be absolutely Covid secure to meet that duty of care. It is not possible to guarantee that when some strains of the virus are so contagious. If services were held and that caused an increase in Covid cases, and in the worst case, fatalities, this would be very stressful for Pete.</li> <li>• It was suggested that we should look at what God wants and whether He wants us to go back to a situation as it was before or whether He wants us to learn from the pandemic and continue to use technology and try to reach a wider audience.</li> </ul>		



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A survey was being prepared by Ruth McKew and Rob Kophamel to garner opinion to find out what people had watched of St Michael's output.</li> <li>• It was questioned whether the high numbers of people viewing the online services had been maintained but Pete explained that nationally, there had been a dip of people viewing church services since the rise at the start of the pandemic.</li> </ul> <p>Pete spoke of the difficulties of opening the church because of the strenuous requirements due to the pandemic. He said it was very hard to maintain standards in a voluntary organisation. He said that a special dispensation to allow churches not to open could be granted but this required PCC approval. Pete had already written to the Archdeacon to let him know that services in person were not taking place but he had advised that the PCC needed to ratify the decision.</p> <p>Pete proposed that we should continue not to hold services in church but that the situation should be reviewed at the next PCC meeting. If the situation changed drastically in the meantime, then the standing committee could make a decision to reverse the decision. In the meantime, Covid would remain as a standing item on the agenda of all PCC meetings. Andrew Evans seconded the proposal and the PCC approved retrospectively the decision not to hold church services and the resolution regarding the future, as proposed above.</p> <p>Pete thanked Steve McKew for his input which he said he particularly valued.</p>	Survey to be sent out	Ruth M and Rob
2063	<b>Vicar's Report</b>	<p><u>Service Update:</u> Pete said he had planned services online up until Easter and he may do an online communion service in February. There were also a few family services coming up.</p> <p><u>Website/Computer Update:</u> Pete said that Rob was updating the website and asked members of the PCC to let Rob know in they have any comments about this.</p> <p>He went on to say that the computers in the office need upgrading. Stu has offered to do this over the next few weeks. Stu explained that there would not be a big hardware cost but there would be Microsoft subscriptions to be purchased. The</p>		



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		<p>cloud would be used for storage and training would be provided for those who use the computers.</p> <p><u>Stream Groups</u>: The Stream Groups had been going on for the last few weeks and had been going well.</p> <p><u>Lent</u>: The YMCA in Crewe had offered to repeat a Lent Course this year. It would go out on Zoom.</p>		
2064	<b>AOB</b>	<p><u>Cloverley Hall</u>: The House Party had been postponed from last year and had been due to take place on the first weekend in May. However, it seemed unlikely that that would happen in the light of the pandemic restrictions. Cloverley Hall (and Central Ministries) were in financial difficulty as, due to the pandemic, they had no income. It was proposed by Phil that a donation of £2,000 be given to Cloverley. The proposal was seconded by John S and it was agreed by all present. It was suggested that a House Party should still take place via Zoom during the first weekend in May and that people could be invited to donate towards the weekend. Those donations could then be sent on to Cloverley Hall to augment the initial donation.</p> <p>Andy Thorne said that following his email to those booked to go on the House Party, only 3 people had requested to have their deposits returned. However, he felt that, in the light of the continuing pandemic and the fact that the House Party would not take place again this year, we should offer to return all the money paid by people.</p> <p><u>Request by Crust and Tipple</u>: Pete had been approached by this company wanting to park their van in the church car park on a Thursday, Friday or Saturday evenings so that they could run their click and collect pizza business. Pete had consulted with Chris Blunt, Vicar of St Lukes, Huntington, who said they permitted the van to park in their car park and had had no problems. However, members of the PCC were concerned that it would impinge on the business of the local Kingsway shops who offered take away. It was put to a vote but only about 4 or 5 people were in favour with the majority not wanting to allow it. Pete said he would notify Crust and Tipple of the decision.</p>	<p>Donation to be sent to Cloverley</p> <p>Those people booked on the House Party to be offered their deposits back</p> <p>Email to be sent to Crust and Tipple</p>	<p>Phil/ Andy T</p> <p>Andy T</p> <p>Pete</p>
	<b>Prayer</b>	The meeting closed with saying the Grace.		



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	<b>Next Meeting</b>	PCC on Monday, 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2021 at 8.00pm via Zoom.		

