

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 7TH APRIL 2019

PRESENT: Canon J Paton, Ms R Coulson, Mrs D Green, Mrs J Peabody, Major J Steeds, Mrs M Griffiths-Eyton, Mrs T Watson-Smith, Mr and Mrs K Chopping, Mr P Plant, Mrs R Wallace, Mr P Sanders Rose, Mrs A Gillis, Mr and Mrs G Price, Ms J Slater, Mr and Mrs A Aitken, Mrs J Anfield, Ms Frances Allison, Mrs S Cullup, Mrs P Willoughby, Mrs S Frost, Mr T Holden, Mrs E Hawkes, Mrs S Davies, Mr and Mrs P Newall, Mrs and Mrs S Burdess, Mrs B Young.

APOLOGIES: Mrs L Plant, Mrs J Barlow, Mrs E Shelley, Mrs R Sanders-Rose, Mrs G Tallett, Mrs N Beabey, Mr P Hazelden.

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

Canon J Paton was in the chair and welcomed all to the meeting.

1. Election of Church Wardens: Ms Coulson and Mrs Green were prepared to stand again, proposed by Mrs Griffiths-Eyton, seconded by Mrs T Watson-Smith, all present were in favour.
2. Election of PCC Lay Vice-Chair. Ms Coulson was prepared to stand again, proposed by Maj Steeds, seconded by Mrs Green, all present were in favour.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Ms Coulson took the chair.

1. Minutes of the Previous Annual Meeting:
Ms Coulson apologised for late arrival of minutes and asked for comments. Mr Plant pointed out several typing errors so secretary can correct. Mr Aitken proposed that these were accepted, seconded by Mr Holden, all present were in favour so the corrected version will be signed by the Lay Chair.
2. Report and Election of Sidesmen:
Mrs Willoughby thanked her team, who are always very helpful and happy to assist, particularly Mr Hazelden who, due to ill health, is unable to continue. Mrs Hawkes has agreed to take his place. Mrs Willoughby said that the following people were happy to continue as Sidesmen: Mr Aitken, Mr Betts, Mr Bucknall, Mrs Green, Mrs Griffiths-Eyton, Mr Mott, Mr Plant, Mrs Price, Mr Taylor and herself. This was proposed by Maj Steeds and seconded by Mr Chopping, all present in favour. Mrs Willoughby also thanked the readers and Canon Paton thanked all intercessors, commenting that the standard of intercessions was very good.
3. Annual Report:
Ms Coulson thanked Mr Plant for producing an informative and succinct report. Mr Plant thanked Ms J Howell and Ms Coulson, Mrs Peabody for the tremendous amount of work involved on the calendar and events through the year, and Mrs Holden for typing this up. There were no queries raised so it was proposed by Mrs Price that the report was accepted, seconded by Mr Holden and all present were in favour. Ms Coulson added her thanks to everyone who had contributed to the report.

4. Finance Report:

Mr Plant, although not the Treasurer, presented the report prepared by Mrs Hornblow. He high-lighted a £19k surplus for 2018, compared with a £6k surplus for 2017, explaining that there was less expenditure for the year but 2019 will incur more expenditure because the parish share will increase by approx. £14k to c£29k. There will be more expenditure on the fabric of the church this year so there will need to be a drive to find a means of increasing income. Apart from this, we are in a stable financial position with Bell Fund and General Fund, with total reserves of about £170k.

Ms Coulson reminded those present that the Bell Fund was a legacy from Jean Bell, specifically designated for the fabric of the church and therefore cannot be used for any other funding. The DAC recognises that the church has been looked after by many generations and it is our responsibility to leave a reasonable fund for those coming after us. Whilst we can use this fund to repair the chancel ceiling, we need to replenish it. Acceptance of the Finance Report was proposed by Mr Holden and seconded by Mr Sanders-Rose; all present were in favour.

5. Appointment of Independent Examiner:

Mr Plant explained that local accountants Goringe have audited the accounts for the last two years at a cost £250+VAT and would be willing to do so again next year. This was proposed by Mr Aitken and seconded by Mrs Watson-Smith, all present were in favour.

The position of PCC Treasurer is still vacant and the PCC has approved the role of be split into two: provision of P&L and annual finance report by one person and day to day management of the funds by another. Mrs Peabody has agreed to take on the latter role and all present joined Ms Coulson in thanking her for taking this on. There is a third element - management of Sunday collections, gift aid etc. – which is done by Mrs Green. Ms Coulson said the PCC is considering whether to pay for bookkeeping services on an hourly basis as no-one has come forward to do this on a volunteer basis. There was some discussion about the role and Mr Plant confirmed it would likely need between two and four hours per month.

6. Parish Giving Scheme:

Mr Chopping reminded those present that St Mary's is the last church in the combined parishes, in use since 1189 and possibly with Saxon origins before that. It is responsible for our Parish School and for three burial grounds. Running costs will increase in 2019 to equal income, leaving no margin for unforeseen expenditure. Current income through the stewardship scheme (planned giving through standing orders, service collections and VAT recovery) and, despite generous donations over the years, numbers are gradually diminishing and inflation has impacted this. The Church of England has devised a Parish Giving scheme which has been adopted by the Diocese of Oxford and is being rolled out by the PCC. All proceeds generated through the scheme come to St Marys and there are no associated costs. It will be administered by a small church team: some PCC members have already joined the Parish Giving scheme, with a plan to approach other stewardship donors shortly. Donors, who can remain anonymous, will be offered the option to inflation-proof their donations and obtain gift aid. The scheme will make it easier for the PCC to manage cashflow as gift aid recovery will be paid monthly and record keeping will be easier. Ultimately, the whole parish will be invited to join the scheme and members of the PCC can

provide details to anyone who wants further info. Collections will of course still be taken in church and for giving scheme members, there will be tokens in church which they can put into the collection instead.

Forms will be at the back of the church which, although the instructions say to send them directly to the scheme address in Gloucester, it would be helpful to give them to Mrs Green

to send so she is aware of donations. Ms Coulson said that people should not feel under pressure regarding the amount they contribute, however small, and Mrs Green will keep all information confidential. The Church Wardens commended this scheme to everyone and thanked Mr Chopping, Mr Aitken and the team for their work on this so far.

7. Report on Electoral Roll:

Mrs Green read out the report on behalf of Jean Barlow, stating that new roll had been compiled. There are now 121 on the roll: although 15 people had been removed in the past year, there had been a lot of new members. Mrs Barlow thanked those who had responded promptly, Mrs Peabody and Mrs Griffiths-Eyton who had chased up and Mrs Willoughby for printing the new roll. There is a copy in church if anyone wants to check their entry.

8. Clergy Report:

Canon John echoed the thanks which have been given in previous reports and for the kindness shown to him. He explained that, despite having had a small operation and subsequent clean bill of health before joining St Mary's, he now requires further surgery in July he hopes will sort things out but which means being off until the end of August.

Canon John apologised for the burden this will place on others. Ms Coulson said how much we appreciate him sharing this and that he will have our full support and prayers.

9. Church Wardens' Report:

Mrs Green thanked Canon John for his great support and emphasised that it was a team effort, with many willing members. She thanked Canon John for all his support, Mrs Willoughby for her organisation of readers and sidesmen and Mr and Mrs Sander-Rose for their organisation of intercessors. Mrs Green commented that the Church always looks wonderful, thanks to Ladies of St Mary's for their cleaning and Mrs Beabey's team for their fabulous flowers. The churchyards have never looked better, thanks to the hard work of Ms Howell, Mr R Pontin, Mr T Knight and Mrs and Mrs Bucknall. The uncovering of many lost graves has been a great achievement. Mrs Green thanked Mrs Tallett, Mrs Bagshaw and the group of mums who work very hard to put together Childrens' church. Mrs Green then thanked Ms Julie Howell, acknowledging that, although we knew that she did an awful lot for St Mary's we didn't realise just how much until her various roles were divided up. We will see her again but meanwhile, thanked her hugely and wished her well. Thanks were also due to Mr Bucknall for his expertise and huge efforts regarding the repair of the Chancel ceiling. She also thanked Mrs Hornblow, who has done a brilliant job as PCC Treasurer.

Mrs Green remembered that we have sadly said farewell to some dear friends of the Church and welcomed others. This week we've said goodbye to Bishop Andrew, who has been a true friend to this church, blessing windows and roofs etc. and providing leadership and guidance for us during some very difficult times, setting us up for where we are today.

10. SUN School, Explorers and Children's Church Report:

Mrs Tallett was unable to attend the meeting but Ms Coulson commended this section of the Annual Report and thanked her in being instrumental in keeping this going. She also thanked Ms Slater for joining the team. Explorers have been going for 21 years and going through a difficult time at present but Mrs Tallett is hopeful as Mrs Sian Webb, a long standing teacher at SUN School, is interested in helping with this. We are delighted to be asked to conduct another Retreat Day for Year Six pupils in 2019.

11. Fund raising report:

Mrs Chopping reported that fundraising had changed considerably this year. The summer lunch had taken place by kind permission of Major and Mrs Steeds and the Harvest Lunch was celebrated in the Village Hall, both of which are more than just fund raisers and most enjoyed by all. Mrs and Mrs Hornblow had put a huge amount of resources, time and money into the annual Fete for the last two years but it is extremely hard work and they are unable to carry on with this. All present wished to record heartfelt thanks to them for taking this on, both before and after the formation of the SUN E community fund-raising charity with all contributing and all having a share of the proceeds. With no large scale fete planned, Mr and Mrs Chopping will open the grounds of their home, Shorth Heath House, for a small scale garden fete with the usual Church stalls and raffle. The other event this year will be the summer lunch but nothing else is planned thus far. Mrs Chopping invited anyone who wants to help with fundraising to come forward.

Ms Coulson thanked Mrs Chopping and her team and encouraged volunteers to come forward. She also thanked Major and Mrs Steeds for opening their home and garden for the summer lunch.

12. Parish Magazine Report:

Mrs Watson-Smith reported that the transition to a colour magazine had been a success although had not increased magazine circulation, which was steady at 270 copies per month. It continues to be printed by Purcoprint, and she thanked Mrs Bagshaw for managing subscriptions and her team for delivering the magazine, and Mrs Peabody in her role as advertising manager. Ms Coulson thanked the editors and all involved in the magazine.

13. Report on Fabric, Goods and Ornaments:

Ms Coulson reported that there are no serious issues to report and the digital inventory of the church is almost complete thanks to Ms Howell's diligence, including photographing of all assets, including trees in the graveyards. The PCC will have to find funds this year for repair of the chancel roof. Last year the PCC looked at potential refurbishment of the alter frontal and Ninian Comper reredos and Ms Coulson had recently received a quote for this which the PCC needs to consider, looking at potential avenues of funding.

14. Any Other Business:

There was no other business so Ms Coulson thanked all present for their attendance and Canon John closed the meeting with the Grace