

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST CHURCH, CARTERTON

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING – 12.05pm on SUNDAY, 18 JULY 2021

Attendance: Janette Bessent, Rev Preb Stephen Bessent, Lynda Bostock, Stephen Bostock, Hannah Cloete, Michael Cox, Ray Goodson, Louise Griffiths, Ian Harley, Sharon Harley, Allister Holt, Rev Ian Howard, Miriam Knight, Gary Long, Andrew Monkhouse, Kath Monkhouse, Doreen Trezise, Linda Woolloff (notes)

Those joining via Zoom were not individually noted

Apologies: Lyndsay Baker, Alison Brown, Margaret Morris, Roy Morris, Janet Sayer

The meeting was chaired by Rev Drew Tweedy, Rector of the Benefice of Brize Norton & Carterton and Chairman of the Parochial Church Council.

Introduction

Rev Tweedy welcomed the attendees to the meeting and commended the Annual Report and Accounts. These had been published in the building, on the website, and had been circulated to those church members who had elected to receive email communications, so there had been a good opportunity for everyone to review the contents.

The Coronavirus pandemic which had swept the nation during 2020 had resulted in monumental and unprecedented actions from the Government. Rev Tweedy thanked everyone for their patience and understanding as the church leadership team had worked to develop ways to establish new ways of reaching out to the community to maintain a pattern of regular worship and pastoral care.

Finance Report (Ray Goodson, Acting Treasurer)

Mr Goodson took the meeting through the detail of the financial performance of the church in 2020 as set out in the Annual Accounts. The Accounts had been independently examined by Shilton Accounting Services and UNANIMOUSLY approved by the Parochial Church Council, as Trustees.

The difficult circumstances presented by the Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent closure of the church building to regular worship for a large part of the year, had naturally affected cash collections, leading to a 59% drop vs 2019. However, regular voluntary giving via bank standing order or through the Parish Giving Scheme had remained steady, with a slight increase recorded. Other income receipts from bequests, donations, statutory fees, hall hiring etc had dropped by 30% vs year ago. Little fund-raising had been possible resulting in an overall reduction of 93% vs 2019. The performance of the CCLA investment funds had shown good growth and increased by over 4%. However, a break-even position had not been achieved at the end of the financial year in December 2020.

Some control and limit on expenditure had been possible during the year, during the building lockdown. However, non-discretionary costs related to Parish Share, the employment of the Children and Families Worker, utilities and other fees associated with general running costs remained unavoidable. Expenses exceeded income by £13,000 at year-end.

The main bank account remained in credit but showed a 22% decline. A separate account is held as a contingent for immediate Fabric needs. Additionally, and with the inclusion of the funding reserve from investments made possible by the Keen legacies, the overall assets of the church accounts remain healthy.

Ray thanked the valuable contribution made by Mrs Alison Ford, Gift-Aid Reclaim officer, and the support he had received from Shilton Accounting Services. Rev Tweedy thanked Mr Goodson for his diligence and hard work throughout the year in looking after the church's financial affairs.

Appointment of an Independent Examiner

The meeting UNANIMOUSLY approved the appointment of Shilton Accounting Services as Independent Examiner for the 2021 Annual Accounts.

Electoral Roll

At the start of the year, the Electoral Roll stood at 77 members. Two members had left the Roll during 2020, and no new nominations had been received. The current Roll number is now 75. The Roll is now open again to new members.

Fabric Report (Mr Michael Cox, Facilities Sub-Group Leader)

It had not been possible to consider tackling any of the long-term projects during a year of lockdown. Routine maintenance had been undertaken along with regular safety checks. Now that lockdown was easing, some of the major projects were being commissioned – car park and roofing repairs, installation of blinds. Longer term projects were also being researched, such as the replacement of heating boilers. The meeting thanked Mr Cox and his team of volunteers for their work during the year.

Enhancements to technology during lockdown had allowed services to be broadcast online during the lockdown. Although it was difficult to estimate accurately the numbers viewing our services, it had been encouraging that many people had connected to them. The “Social Media” sub-group were currently looking at ways to use our technological abilities to drive this forward.

Election of Officers

Mr Roy Morris had represented the church at Witney Deanery Synod for the past year and would continue in this role which has a three-year term. One vacancy remained and Rev Tweedy invited any member of the electoral roll to consider stepping forward.

Mr Stephen Bostock and Mr Ian Harley had completed their three-year term as members of the Parochial Church Council. They had both agreed to stand for re-election. No other nominations had been received, so both were UNANIMOUSLY elected. One further vacancy remains to be filled for a three-year term.

Rev Tweedy thanked Mr Bostock for the work he had done in leading a team to produce a contingency plan which had guided our strategy and adherence to Government and Diocesan procedures throughout the pandemic.

The appointment of officers for leadership roles and committee members would be made at the first meeting of the new Parochial Church Council immediately following this meeting.

Questions Raised during the Meeting

Mrs Griffiths asked about ways in which we as a church might consider using some of our reserve funds to help those in the local community who are suffering trauma caused by the pandemic. *Rev Tweedy said that a hardship fund had been set up at the start of lockdown to offer financial assistance to struggling families. Within the last month, a donation of £5,000 had also been made to the Family Centre in response to their appeal for assistance. Mr Goodson said that, for over a year, the church had been making a financial donation of £200 a month to the local branch of Christians Against Poverty (CAP), and during lockdown the Gatehouse Project in Oxford had received £50 a month towards food. The Parochial Church Council were also currently discussing other community initiatives as part of its longer-term plans.*

Mrs Bostock asked whether a report had been prepared concerning St John’s School. *Rev Tweedy said that an update had been included in the Annual Report. The school has a good reputation within the area and strong links with this church. The school had received an excellent Ofsted report and was currently being assessed by the Church of England for a SIAMS report (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools). Both Rev Drew and Mr Michael Watts were governors at the school. There were two further vacancies and Rev Tweedy invited anyone interested in applying for a position to contact him. Members of the clergy team record a*

contribution to assemblies each week at St John's School, and in fact strong links are being established with the other schools in Carterton and Brize Norton through these recordings and other teaching opportunities.

There being no further issues to discuss, and no questions raised, Rev Tweedy closed the meeting at 12.45pm.

Presentation slides used during this meeting are available on the website.