



## **MINUTES**

**MEETING OF:** Annual Church Meeting of Buckingham Parish Church

**DATE & TIME:** Sunday 28 April 2019 at 10.45am

### **Opening Hymn & Prayer**

The meeting opened with the hymn 'Be Thou My Vision'. Prayers were led by Revd. Will Pearson-Gee.

### **Vestry Meeting**

#### **1 Appointment of clerk for the meetings**

Sarah Dumbleton was proposed by Robert O'Connell and seconded by Mike Evans as secretary for the meeting. All were in favour.

#### **2. Apologies for absence**

169 people attended the meeting and 21 apologies were recorded.

#### **3. Election of Church Wardens**

3.1 There were two nominations for Churchwarden. Mike Evans was proposed by Lyn Chelsom and seconded by Gerry Causer. Max Hailey was proposed by Harry Morten and seconded by Lorna Piper. There being no other nominations they were duly elected.

3.2 Revd. Will Pearson-Gee expressed his sincere thanks to Paddy Collins, who had stepped down as Churchwarden, for all of his hard work and support.

### **Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

#### **1. Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 26 April 2018**

Harry Morten proposed and Paul Hirons seconded that the minutes be approved as a correct record of the APCM meeting held on 26 April 2018. All were in favour.

#### **2 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **3 Presentation of the Electoral Roll**

3.1 Revd. Danny Rodgers presented the Electoral Roll. At last year's APCM, there were a total of 279 names on the roll. This was a renewal year and the current total for the new list was 275, of which 97 are non-resident in this ecclesiastical parish. There were an additional 3 names waiting to be added to the roll after the meeting. Thanks was recorded to Heidi Buchan, the

new Electoral Roll Officer, for taking over the role and preparing the report.

3.2 The Electoral Roll was proposed by Pauline Stanton-Saringer and seconded by Helen Venn and accepted by the meeting.

3.3 Revd. Will Pearson-Gee reported that Gill Stopps stepped down from the role of Electoral Roll Officer on 31 December 2018 after 28 years' service and expressed his sincere thanks to Gill for all her work in such an important role.

## **4 Election and Appointments**

### **i Election of deputy wardens**

4.1 There were two nominations for Deputy Churchwarden. Pam Fox was proposed by Bob Legrove and seconded by Elaine Causer, and Paul Hiron was proposed by Daphne Browne and seconded by Robert O'Connell. All agreed.

### **ii Election of PCC members**

4.2 There were three nominations to serve on the Parochial Church Council:

- Lorna Piper was proposed by Flo Thornton and seconded by Tracy Roskell
  - Robert O'Connell was proposed by Matt Lambert and seconded by Gerry Causer
  - Harry Stolze was proposed by Sarah Dumbleton and seconded by Jo Ashpool
- All in favour.

4.3 Thanks was expressed to those PCC members who had stepped down or rotated off of the PCC membership this year: Steve Hallett, Mike Lee and Will Zanelli.

### **iii Appointment of sidespersons for the coming year**

4.4 A list of side people to serve for the coming year was proposed by Gerry Causer and seconded by Lynne Legrove. All agreed.

4.5 Prayers for the elected wardens, PCC members and sidespersons were led by Revd. Will Pearson-Gee.

## **5 Hymn – Before the Throne of God above**

## **6 Finance and Stewardship Report**

6.1 Harry Morten, the Head of Finance, introduced himself and presented a series of slides giving the financial highlights for 2018, and looking forward to 2019.

### **6.2 Financial highlights for 2018:**

- The total incoming resources was £329k, this had decreased by £166k compared to the previous year, largely due to legacy money of £180k received in late 2017.
- £279k came from regular giving, and the remainder of the income came from grants, events, investment income and ancillary trading such as wedding fees, use of the church and The Centre.
- Total expenditure was £335k, which was the same as 2017.
- Net movement in funds was -£38k.
- The general fund showed a decrease in our balance to only £17k, with £50k being an excess of expense over income last year and the remainder being a resettling of the legacy monies back into the Projects fund.
- Staff team costs was the single highest item of expenditure at nearly £132,044. This followed on from the incredible growth in activities that they are leading.
- Other expenditure included £80k for the Parish Share and £24k on building maintenance.

- Charitable Giving at £26k came in on budget due to the great work of Keith Croxton and the MOG Team. It was encouraging that the Mission costs, at £12,402, were also significant, this covered items such as Alpha, the food service, outreach, pastoral care, minibus and many other activities at the Centre.

6.3 Harry expressed his thanks to the Treasurer, Pam Fox, for her sterling work paying all the bills and maintaining the accounts; Judith Bundock, for her work as Stewardship Co-ordinator; and to Mike Evans, the previous Treasurer, for his support and mentoring.

6.4 **2019: Where our money will go and where we think it will come from:**

Harry reported that in 2019 the expected spend was £326,000, which was a reduction of £10k on last year. This was an attempt to avoid a deficit over the course of the year. Building maintenance would be around £127,400 this year due to some significant capital projects including the organ restoration, the new CCTV and fire system, the glass door engraving, the final kitchen upgrade, the church noticeboard, some marble floor repairs, a light refurb of the clock in the tower and the purchase of new chairs. Some of these projects would come out of the legacy money.

6.5 Harry reported that in 2019 an income of £323k had been budgeted. As a successful and ambitious church we need to spend £338k to fulfil our plans to continue God's work in Buckingham, which leaves a shortfall of £15k and we cannot afford to run another deficit in 2019. The Finance team was looking to the generosity of the congregation to sustainably fund this shortfall and it had been working on ways to facilitate giving in the church. The giving series in October saw a number of people start to give regularly or increase their giving and a card reader was being trialled at the 6pm service, allowing contactless payments as well as larger chip and pin donations. Harry also reported on the Parish Giving Scheme, run by the Church of England, which allowed donors to increase their giving in line with inflation.

6.6 Judith Bundock noted that it was pleasing to see the growing number of new standing orders for the benefit of the church and reported that it would be very helpful, for budgeting purposes, if those setting up standing orders on-line could also fill in a Giving Form, so that the frequency of the gift and its eligibility for gift aid could be noted. Giving Forms were available on the website.

6.7 Tim Venn queried why ancillary trading income had decreased by £12k since 2017. Harry confirmed that he would look into this figure and report back.

**7 Presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts and Appointment of the Auditor for 2018**

7.1 It was reported that, due to an error on the financial statement, the accounts could not be approved at the meeting. The error occurred whilst transcribing the balance sheet, which had been approved by the Auditor, to the annual report. Therefore, the accounts would need to be reissued and approved at a special Parochial Church Meeting on the 19 May 2019.

7.2 Harry Morten proposed that the same accountants, Hills & Burgess, be used again. Mike Evans seconded, and all agreed.

7.3 Keith Hagon led prayers for the church finances.

**8 Hymn - Here is love vast as the Ocea**

**9 Children's, Young Persons and Families Video**

9.1 Revd Danny Rodgers introduced the Children's, Young People and Families ministry and a

video which detailed its work during 2018. Thanks was expressed to the CYPFAM team and all of the volunteers for their work in this important ministry.

9.2 Prayers for the Children's, Young People and Families ministry were led by Judith Wigley.

## **10 Mission and Outreach Group Video**

10.1 Revd Will Pearson-Gee introduced a video detailing the work of the Mission and Outreach Group during 2018. This group, led by Keith Croxton, does incredibly valuable work in the community of Buckingham and beyond and is supported by some amazing dedicated volunteers.

10.2 Prayers for the work of the Mission and Outreach Group were led by Gill Croxton.

10.3 Although not included in the video, the important work of the KitKat club and Holiday Club was noted. Will directed those at the meeting to the Church Groups and Activities booklet, which included further information on all the various mission and outreach activities.

## **11 Rector's report and look ahead**

11.1 Lucia Pearson-Gee opened the Rector's report item with a bible reading - Luke 4, verses 14-30.

11.2 Revd. Will Pearson-Gee directed the APCM to his report on 2018, which was available at the meeting and also on the website. He explained that in the interest of time he would not repeat the content of this report.

11.3 Will began his talk by focusing on the recent Easter services, to which over 600 people attended, including 109 children at the 9.30am service alone. Will expressed his sincere thanks to the large number of people who volunteered a great deal of time to make the services such a success. Will reported on the positive feedback that he had recently received regarding BPC, along with the good news that Buckingham Parish Church is thriving and that we are being blessed with growth. Buckingham Parish Church is relevant in the town, the activities that we engage in change lives and make a difference, and BPC is held in high regard in the community.

11.4 Will expressed his thanks and appreciation to the entire congregation for their love, support, time, generosity, financial giving and prayers over the past year.

11.5 Looking forward to 2019, Will reported that things at BPC were going really well and, with the likelihood of a period without a curate this year, there were no plans to embark on any radical initiatives at the present time. Following years of rapid growth, Will would now be concentrating on strategy, leading and building the team, raising new leaders, mentoring, and encouraging the persecuted church.

11.6 As mentioned in Harry Morten's finance report, there were numerous changes to the fabric which would be progressed in 2019 including the Kitchen Reordering, the Portable Baptistry, the Noticeboard and the new Chairs, which have been approved by the PCC and would be delivered in May. Changes to the Side Chapel were still being considered. This would include swapping the stained-glass window from the kitchen with the clear one currently in-situ and removing the panelling, which would make the area lighter and more open.

11.7 Will reported that there had been some discussion regarding modifications to the position of the Rood Screen and he presented an image of one suggestion to the APCM. It was noted

that this option, which involved the removal of the uprights and raising the top of the rood screen, was a compromise which would open up the chancel, offering some privacy to the choir but not separating them.

- 11.8 Will also reported on some of the challenges facing Buckingham Parish Church during 2019:
- The 11am service would start 15 minutes later on a trial basis during the summer term. The impact of this change would be reviewed during August.
  - Two new staff members, Worship Team Leader Ali Burt and Youth Worker Lara Burt, would start on 13th May and would need settling in.
  - Jacob would leave in September to commence his studies
  - Danny Rodgers would most likely leave us later this year
  - Stewardship needed some focus
  - Planning the Parish weekend away
  - A leadership gathering event was planned for later in the year for all those with a leadership role.
- 11.9 Will reported that the Diocese had confirmed that an immediate replacement would not be provided when Danny leaves BPC, and we would be without a curate until at least sometime in 2020, possibly even later. For a church with a regular congregation of 400, this was of some concern. Will acknowledged his wonderful team, including many fabulous retired clergy. In particular Michael Greig was currently working full time managing connect groups, Alpha and dealing with discipleship issues and some pastoral care, and this was not sustainable nor reasonable. With a church as big as BPC, there was an increasing need for both a curate and an Associate Minister. An Associate Minister would be someone who Will could share the ministry leadership with and would become head of discipleship. It was common for churches as large as BPC to have such a paid post. Our biggest goal for 2019 would be this extra ministry post and a challenge for us was to work out how to best achieve this.
- 11.10 Will ended his report by conveying how much he loves being the Rector of Buckingham Parish Church and expressing his thanks to the church family for making BPC the type of church that he has always dreamt of being part of.

## **12 Any Other Business**

None

## **13 Question & Answer session**

- 13.1 Brian Hubbard noted that it would be useful for the church family to know how much an Associate Minister would cost BPC, in order for people to prayerfully consider increasing their contributions for this purpose. Will reported that, in addition to a house, a stipend of approximately £44k would be required. Will acknowledged that this is an extremely large amount, however God provides for our needs, and a part-time Associate Minister or someone who already had accommodation in the area could be a more achievable option.
- 13.2 Brian Hubbard commented that if we want the church to grow, reach more souls and save more people for Jesus then everyone should consider investing in the growth and paying for this new ministry position.
- 13.3 Geraldine Collins asked if the voice of the congregation could be added to the request for a curate to replace Danny immediately. Will replied that if people felt strongly about this then they were very welcome to contact the Diocese to express their concern at this situation.
- 13.4 Ben Waine queried if there was scope for partnering with another church within the Diocese,

in order to share an extra member of staff. In particular the churches in Bicester, with the town's large growth in housing, might be interested in sharing resources in this way and this innovative approach might be something that the Diocese could considered more deeply. Will reported that he was mentoring clergy in Brackley, however there were no plans for any further resource sharing.

13.5 Revd Danny Rodgers proposed a vote of thanks to Revd. Will Pearson-Gee for all that he does for the congregation of Buckingham Parish Church and the wider community in Buckingham.

**14 Holy Communion**

Attendees of the APCM shared Holy Communion.

**15 Hymn - O Lord my God /How Great Thou Art**

**16 Closing Prayer**

The Revd. Will Pearson-Gee closed the meeting with Prayer and Grace at 12.48.