

Minutes of the Annual Church meetings of St Mary's, Warbleton on 11th October 2020 held in the church building and via Zoom.

The meetings were chaired by Rev'd Marc Lloyd who opened in prayer. They followed the service of Morning Prayer with Holy Communion with readings from Acts 19 verses 1-22. Luke writes of the Pauls' teaching and ministry to the Ephesians.

The Meeting for election of Churchwardens

1. **The minutes of last year's meeting** were posted on the Church website prior to the meeting and accepted, having been previously considered by the PCC.
2. **The election of Churchwardens:** David Cleverley and Jonathan Austin had been nominated for election and were duly appointed.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Sue Holden.
2. **The minutes of last year's meeting** were accepted, having been previously considered by the PCC.
3. **Matters arising:** there were no questions from the floor.

4. Reports:

a) Changes to the Electoral Roll since the last annual meeting:

Since the last APCM we have lost two members of the Electoral Roll bringing our number down to 81, of whom 49 live inside the Parish and 32 outside.

b) PCC Annual Report:

A copy of the Trustees Annual report was posted on the Church website prior to the meeting. Judith Hemsley was thanked for compiling this.

c) Financial Statement of the PCC for the year ending December 31st 2019:

This was posted on the website prior to the meeting. The accounts were complete and Independently Examined by Jonathan Gray. Meryl was thanked for her hard work this last year.

There were no questions from the floor.

d) Churchwarden's Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Church:

David Cleverley gave this report:

During the last year we have no major projects undertaken but we have undertaken a few maintenance jobs as recommended in the 2018 quinquennial including a small wall maintenance job adjacent to the lych gate. We have had to obtain a faculty to remove 3 dangerous trees from the churchyard at considerable expense. Marc reported that there are plans to plant two small trees as replacements, but in places where they can do no damage.

There are considerable jobs in the future which will have to be tackled: the tower repointing and the central heating pipes and radiators inside the church building.

e) Deanery Synod Report:

Report presented by David Cleverley. This was posted in full on the website prior to the meeting.

Deanery Synod meets three times a year co-chaired by Marc Lloyd. The Warbleton church members are Vivian Bower and David Cleverley.

Deanery Synods take place to provide encouragement to the parishes, to share useful experience and occasionally to receive reports to discuss and to feed motions up the line to Diocesan synod after due debate. For sharing we have heard from Warbleton, BSG and Dallington, Netherfield, Herstmonceux and Wartling. For encouragement we heard in May from Jayne Prestwood the Diocesan Adviser for Lay Vocations and Ministry.

Anne Procter from Horam was invited to speak on how she had felt called into bereavement counselling, then becoming the Deanery Healing Adviser and then an "enthusiastic" Street Pastor.

The Treasurer (Brian Gibson who announced his pending retirement) reported that the Deanery had received Bishop Richard's thanks for meeting in aggregate its parish giving target for 2018.

The June synod was replaced by an Episcopal Visitation at which Bishop Richard led an open consultation event on Diocesan Strategy to which Churchwardens, Readers and PCC members particularly were invited. He began by acknowledging the initiatives already in place. The four "more" areas were: MORE OPEN, MORE CONVERTED TO JESUS CHRIST, MORE GENEROUS and MORE ENGAGED. We long to see a church whose reputation in the community is one of bringing blessing and transformation: a church which works with all those of good will to contribute to the common good.

In November Bishop Richard was invited to return to a Dallington Synod prior to his departure to be installed as Diocesan Bishop of Hereford to leave with us his reflections for the future here in Sussex. He told us that we are all on a journey to reflect what it is to be a disciple of Christ. He set out six reflections for us: 1 There is a cultural journey to be undertaken from volunteering to discipleship. 2. The word diocese describes us collectively not a tax collecting body. 3. Generous giving is more than just charitable giving. 4. The organisational approach has to be more spiritual than tactical. It is God's church not ours. 5. The Church is a community not a building. It's a question of growing followers of Jesus not filling seats. 6. We must learn to ask the right questions: how can we, for instance, be witnesses of Christ and follow Jesus keeping the distinctiveness of the Gospel when distraction from that path is so easy.

In summary, to gain Christ you must leave all else, God First, Christ First.

f) Safeguarding Report

This was posted on the website prior to the meeting. Marc Lloyd thanked Vivian Bower for his exemplary efforts to complete the SQP programme.

There were no reported safeguarding incidents or expressions of concern during 2019. The year was dominated by the initiation of procedures, resulting from the demanding national church requirements set out in The Parish Safeguarding Handbook and the Diocese of Chichester in its Simple Quality Protects Programme. We updated our "headline" safeguarding policy in July 2019 in line with Diocesan changes.

We issued 12 formal letters of PCC appointment setting out role expectations where additionally there were safeguarding responsibilities and related training requirements. All of those currently requiring safeguarding training have now completed the required

training currently available although there is a Covid backlog for those requiring the “senior” level (C2). DBS clearances including renewals are up to date.

We have issued letters to the parents of our children and young people informing them of our safeguarding policies, standards, procedures, useful contacts and how to express concerns. A copy is in the Safeguarding section of the church website. To sit alongside our Code of Behaviour for adults working with children and young people we have created and issued a set of Guidelines for those adults in our congregation who are involved with assisting other adults who are to be regarded as vulnerable. So far 18 such sets of guidelines have been issued and further copies are available for anyone else who would like a copy (from the Parish Safeguarding Officer).

We were granted our Diocesan SQP Certificate of Completion for a church of our size, on 17th Sep 2020. I am very grateful for the support and contribution of the Safeguarding Team, and for the coordinators of our groups. Jonathan, Jane and Sue have produced fresh Risk Assessments in respect of Covid 19 protection requirements for our use of the church, and the Church Rooms by the Sunday Club. Similar risk assessments for TCWNN and Little Warblers will follow before they meet again. My handover to Steve continues to be delayed whilst Steve is carrying the extra implementation responsibility for Covid 19 procedures at his place of work.

5. Election of laity to Deanery Synod

David Cleverly was nominated to continue in his role on the Deanery Synod. Anyone else interested in filling the casual vacancy to Deanery Synod was encouraged to contact Marc Lloyd. [Matthew Van Grutten tried to volunteer at the meeting but was unable to be heard on Zoom]

6. Election of PCC members as representatives of the laity:

Nominations were received from Jane Atherden, Meryl Clark, Sue Holden, and Gail Welford, who were duly elected to the PCC. (The Reader, Jeremy Cooke, also serves on the PCC)

Jennifer Gill and Vivian Bower were thanked for their many years of service on the PCC.

7. Appointment of the Independent Examiner:

Jonathan Gray has very kindly offered to continue as Independent Examiner for the coming year.

This was approved unanimously.

8. Rector’s remarks:

Marc Lloyd expressed his thanks to the Churchwardens David Cleverley, and Jonathan Austin, Jeremy and Barbara Cooke, Steve Clark, Judith Hemsley, Gail Welford, Meryl Clark, Sue Holden. He spoke about some forthcoming events including a Zoom meeting from Bishop Will on Wed 18th Nov and invited all present to log in.

Marc asked for prayers for the Christmas services and asked for input to see how things may change after the pandemic.

9. Any other business:

There was none.

10. Closing Prayer

The meeting closed at 1:45 pm with prayer.

[The meeting had inevitable communication glitches as circumstances led it was conducted in this unusual way. As a result, at the conclusion of the meeting, Gail Welford thanked Marc for his hard work and that thanks goes to Yvonne too. This was missed in the meeting and I would like it to be on record. Jonathan Austin should also be thanked for the task of setting up not just the Facebook streaming of the church service, which is now a regular occurrence but also the APCM zoom meeting in an area where internet access is patchy.]