

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

30TH April 2017

The meeting was asked to elect the Clerk, Pat Thirkettle was appointed.

Rev Philip Rowe opened in prayer acknowledging it had been a difficult year, but giving thanks for God's faithfulness throughout and looking forward to the future in God's hands. He prayed for warm hearts, wise heads and kind tongues for the meeting.

Those in attendance signed the register and were publicly checked. There were 36 in attendance with apologies received from 17.

Election of Churchwardens. Mrs Sue Farr was standing down, and Mr Martin Gibson is willing to continue. He thanked Mrs Sue Farr for seven years service, combining keeping the faith and being both practical and pragmatic. He announced that he is now also a Parish Councillor and encouraged us to speak to him with any problems. Mrs Debbie Harries was proposed by Mr Martin Gibson, seconded by Dr David Shaw and duly elected as the second Churchwarden.

Minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated on line and in printed form and were proposed for acceptance by Mr Martin Gibson, seconded by Dr Michael Wright and accepted unanimously. No matters arising.

Electoral Roll. Mr Trevor Anderson said there is a revised edition in the Vestry and available for inspection at any time. Two names have come off, and five added, the total is 202 on the Electoral Roll. He wished to stand down as Electoral Roll Officer, leaving it in good order and willing to help the next person take over. Mrs Lesley Clarke thanked him for all he had done, and urged someone to take it on.

Election of PCC representatives. Three were standing down: Miss Amy Fowler, Mr Christoph Schwitzer and Mr Denis Jones and were thanked by Mrs Lesley Clarke. The following were re elected: Mrs Pat Thirkettle, Dr Michael Wright, Mr David Prothero, Mr Trevor Anderson, Mrs Fiona Macaskill and Dr David Shaw. Mrs Sue Farr is standing as our Deanery Synod representative; there were still two vacant positions, Mrs Lesley Clarke asked if there was anyone willing to serve.

Appointment of Sidespersons. The existing list was read out; Mr Martin Gibson proposed, seconded by Mrs June Robbins and they were unanimously elected.

Appointment of Independent Examiner. The re election of Mr Roger Smart was proposed by Mr Trevor Anderson, seconded by Mr Denis Jones and passed unanimously.

Church Accounts 2017. Copies of the Accounts and Annual Review had been in church for two Sundays. The Treasurer, Mr David Prothero, pointed out that the accounts are an integrated set for St Mary's Olveston and St John's Aust. In general terms the finances of both churches were in a reasonably sound position at the end of 2016 and both churches were able to meet key financial objectives relating to the day to day running of the church, the care of the church buildings and outward giving. He thanked the congregations of both churches for their generous support throughout the year.

As far as general funds were concerned, income exceeded expenditure for both churches, with increased balances at the end of the year of £7,000 for Olveston and £1,700 for Aust.

At Aust, graveyard maintenance accounts for 20% of expenditure; a graveyard fund had been established, which was very helpful as in 2016 donations received more than covered the £1,200 cost. In terms of restricted funds, a new sound system had been purchased and had been well received by the congregation.

At Olveston there was an increase in parochial fees owing to so many funerals and sadly less spent on Rev Roly Bain's ministry. £25,000 had been spent from the Fabric Fund, including £15,000 on a Memorial wall in the graveyard. We also benefited from a £60,000+ legacy from the estate of Mrs Kathleen Hawkins.

Looking ahead there are challenges with financial implications, such as ministry changes, an ageing congregation profile and repairs to the fabric of the church.

He thanked the Gift Aid Secretary Mr Michael Kirby for recovering all the income tax due to us for 2016 prior to the production of the accounts, also Mrs Joyce Prothero the cashier, whose job was made harder by having a new bank account and Dr Michael Wright for his advice and support throughout the year. He thanked Rev Ann Parker and the two churchwardens in Aust for their support and for making him so welcome. He thanked the Independent, Examiner, Mr Roger Smart, for his challenging and thorough scrutiny of the accounts, but laced with humour.

Mr Bernard Fennell thanked Mr David Prothero and asked what the key factors were contributing to the increase of £7,000 in the general fund balance at Olveston. Mr David Prothero explained that there had been an increase of £2,000 in tax efficient giving, £5,000 in donations and £2,000 in parochial fees.

The accounts for Aust had already been accepted by Aust DCC. Mr Martin Gibson proposed and Mr Roland Harley seconded the combined accounts and they were unanimously adopted.

Reports, printed in the meeting booklet. Mrs Lesley Clarke thanked all those responsible and said they were a testament to all the hard work that goes on in the church.

Vicar. Rev Philip Rowe said he had heard that the new post of priest-in-charge of Severnside North parishes would be advertised as tenure, i.e. permanent until 70 years of age. It would be re-advertised in June, with interviews in July and with three months notice it should be possible to have a new vicar in post by the end of October. The original applicant will re-apply, without a new interview. The legalities of the changes will take time but will be fast tracked. The PCC needs to agree the job description by the end of May and familiarisation/ interviews will be on 20/21 July. The new vicar will live in Alveston. Rev Philip Rowe expects more applicants this time, but it is harder to find people willing to take on a vicar's responsibility these days. Mr Denis Jones said he sees many jobs advertised several times in the Church Times and wondered why we only advertise once. Rev Philip Rowe said Bishop Lee feels once is enough and website research shows high first time response. Rev Ann Lloyd said she felt previous interested candidates would see it. Mr Trevor Anderson asked if we could spread it by word of mouth to which the answer was yes.

Olveston Vicarage will be sold. The Diocese is talking to local residents who wish to buy it and make it available to the PCC and possibly any self supporting vicar who might like it. The Bishop is happy for us to have an unpaid priest. All this is in the pipe line awaiting God's will.

Mr Denis Jones asked who the vicarage would belong to; the answer was the private individuals who had bought it. Dr David Shaw said it sounded like a pipe dream, and will this affect the appointee? Rev Philip Rowe said it would help the vicar in Alveston. Rev Ann Lloyd said it would need a very special person and it would be difficult. Mr Graham Clark said he was confused, would the vicar be in Alveston? Rev Philip Rowe said yes and the vicar in Olveston would be the curate. He then went on to say that he had been here nineteen years and although he feels sad and we are a great bunch of people, it is the right time for him to move on and two 'Godinstances' on the same day helped him to that conclusion. He had an email from Bishop Lee about the new contract, and then heard that the ballot result was overwhelmingly in favour of keeping Rev Roly Bain's picture in the church. He is very uneasy about this as he feels the focus should be on God. Also the suggested changes to morning services had not been agreed, so all in all he thinks we need a new vicar with new vision, and he is looking forward to starting afresh in Pilning.

Dr Michael Wright said, with his Severnside Group of Churches hat on, that having two full time priests in Severnside North and Severnside South would be powerful leadership and provide hope for the future. Mrs Lesley Clarke thanked Rev Philip Rowe saying we had all benefited from his teaching, leadership and dependability.

Chairperson. Mrs Lesley Clarke said it had been a tricky year with the untimely death of Rev Roly Bain and the proposed re-organisation of the area, which has led to a lot of extra work including writing a parish profile and job description. She thanked the PCC for working hard and all those who participated.

St John's Chapelry, Aust. Rev Ann Parker has just retired from Pilning and was not present. Mr David Prothero said in light of her retirement there will be changed service times and it was agreed to try a ten o'clock service. Rev David Bone asked us to join him on the Aust Pilgrimage on 20th May. It starts from the Cathedral at 8 am to arrive in Aust for the five o'clock service with the option of joining it at Patchway, Cattybrook Brick Works or any other point.

Churchwardens. No questions

Worship. No questions

Mission Leadership Team. No questions.

Director of Music. Mr Angus Macaskill said as someone with no connection with the music how much he enjoyed it.

Bell Ringers. Mrs June Robbins said it was sad because the ringers mostly came from Tyrtherington, we only have three. Several had been trained but had not continued.

The Bells of St Mary's. Mrs Pat Thirkettle said they also need more ringers.

Outreach. Mrs Gail Lowe said the Springs of Hope appeal for a new solar water pump in Zambia and refurbishment of the Womens' Shelter in Bristol had reached its target of £16,000 in less than six months, which is miraculous and shows God's hand was on it. It will be kept open as the school have fund raising plans and she thanked all those who supported it.

Dr Michael Wright gave congratulations to all outreach events such as the Easter Experience, connection with the school and the village. He thanked all involved in the care and support for those ill, old or vulnerable in the community, and asked them to continue. Mrs Lesley Clarke said there is a triennial arrangement with the school: Easter Experience, Advent Experience and Prayer Space. Mrs Gail Lowe said the Art Trail exhibition in the church had attracted many people including Year 5 from Olveston School. They stayed an hour and asked searching questions of the three artists exhibiting. Mr Angus Macaskill, Mrs Rosemary Setter and Mrs Gail Lowe will be going to the school in future to hold painting workshops.

Back to Front. No questions.

Safeguarding. No questions.

Buildings. Mr Graham Clark said that his wife Mariann had offered the church a wooden bench last August, with the costs covered for installing it, in memory Rev Roly Bain. She had had no answer from the church and had since had an offer from another organisation. She preferred it to come to the church but was disappointed not to have had a reply. Mr Martin Gibson was aware of the offer but it had not been possible to make any decision while substantial changes took place in the graveyard. The church would like the bench and he would personally speak to Mrs Mariann Clark. Mrs June Robbins said that the existing bench, dedicated to Mrs Pitcher, was rotten and the family were willing for it to be replaced.

Social, Publicity and Communication. No questions.

Deanery Synod. No questions.

Friends of St Mary's. No questions.

Pastoral Assistants. Dr Michael Wright said it was important to reach out to all in need and it was great to see we have a vigorous team, and thanks to all again. Mr Trevor Cook said we have a network that operates all the year round, and thanked both teams. Mr Angus Macaskill asked why the Pastoral team had no funds. Mr Trevor Cook said there was no need as it was all voluntary and done by phone and visiting. Mr David Prothero said the church gives the Ecumenical Support Group £250 annually, (the Methodist church gives £100 similarly) to pay for plants and cards at festival times.

A.O.B. Nothing.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 8.30pm.