

# Minutes of the Meeting of St. James P.C.C.

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021

## The meeting was held on Zoom due to Covid-19 restrictions

**Present:** Rob Powell, Johan Allen, Nick Burt, Liz Gibbons, Adam Seymour-Davies, Marcia Gordon, Ailie Neill, Alan Burrows, Lisa Burrows, Jacqueline Gray, John Talbot, Gabby Parikh (Diocese of Southwark).

1. **Welcome:** Rob welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a special welcome to Gabby Parikh. He then opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. **Apologies:** Glynis Wilkinson, John Farebrother, Peter Neill, Stephanie Sulaiman, Millie Miller, Frances Christian, Kat Striesow.
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**  
The minutes of the meeting from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020 were approved unanimously.
4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

a) **Fire Safety (Item 4a)**

We are still awaiting quotes for the final items (two fire doors and the kitchen hatch), but these have now been added to a larger package of works including items from the QI programme.

b) **Living in Love & Faith (Item 7)**

Rob reported that he had reflected on the discussion at the December meeting and had concluded that he would run the LLF course as it stands, but would be open to questions in sessions for clarification or information. He stressed that, if there is a split in the Church of England at the end of the LLF process, then it would be the PCC that would decide which way St James would go and therefore it is important that PCC and church members are able to weigh the arguments up for themselves and reach their own conclusions. A date for the course will be fixed when the COVID pandemic has abated.

5. **Finance Report:**

a) **Parish Giving Scheme**

Gabby Parikh, Head of Giving for the Diocese of Southwark, introduced the Parish Giving Scheme as a fairly new scheme available to church members for their regular giving to St James. It is operated centrally as an independent charity through which donors are able to channel their giving to the church. The benefits include a reduction in administration for the church and an encouragement to members to give in a planned, regular way, including the opportunity to increase their giving each year. PCC members were asked to give the scheme some thought and a decision will be made at the next meeting as to whether to adopt it.

b) **Management Accounts:**

Alan presented the management accounts as at the end of December.

We have an income of £185,129 v a budget of £218,800 with a variance of -£33,671. This deficit is due to COVID lockdown restrictions imposed upon the UK in March 2020. It was inevitable we would experience loss in revenue, mainly hall and centre hire which is £24,749.00 (27.21%) below anticipated budget. Although we have been unable to meet in person since March 2020, income from donations received was only £904 (0.62%) below anticipated budgeted income. An amazing outcome.

Expenditure during 2020 was £197,319 compared with a budget of £243,599 – an underspend of £46,280 (19%) below anticipated expenditure. As with income, this underspend is largely due the church being empty and thereby reducing maintenance/repairs costs in Church and hall. We also have not used all the budgeted feasibility study (-£10,212) or Fire safety (-£5,150) budgets.

Even through the darkness of the pandemic, Christ has continued to show himself as our Provider.

### **c) Advent Gift Day 2020**

Alan reported that the current total stands at £9981 inclusive of Gift Aid. This falls short of our target, but it is understandable given the circumstances. The £3000 has been remitted to the 3 chosen charities.

### **d) Draft Budget 2021**

Alan presented the draft budget for 2021 which hadn't changed since the first draft in December, showing an expected income of £203,170 and expenditure of £228,808. When the remaining BFK feasibility study costs and the contingency figure are accounted for this shows a budgeted deficit of £5,900. Approval of the budget was proposed by John Talbot and seconded by Nick Burt and was carried unanimously.

## **Pause for Prayer**

### **6. Services & Activities Update**

Rob reported that Since we last met, London had gone into Tier 4 COVID restrictions on 19<sup>th</sup> December and then full lock down at beginning of January. Though communal worship is still allowed, after consultation, we decided once again to go online only in an effort to protect people's health and this was supported by the Archdeacon. We will keep this under review as things progress in the coming weeks.

The route map seems to suggest, God willing, a gradual easing of lock down restrictions, maybe in March or by Easter, with a possible return to something like normality in September. As soon as we are able to do so we will restart showing the service on the screen in church, with the hope that we can restart normal in-person services, midweek clubs and activities in the autumn.

### **7. Christmas Review**

Rob reported on the online Christmas services – Carol Service (464 views on YouTube), Christingle (117 with 100 packs delivered), Christmas Day (113). This was encouraging. Thanks to Jo Seymour-Davies initiative all our vulnerable members received a call or a door-step visit or were part of the Christmas Dinner/Hamper scheme operated by St Alban's. The PCC particularly highlighted the joy the services brought through the participation of our children, particularly the Christingle.

### **8. Church Weekend Away**

Rob reported that he had consulted the planning team and the Church Leaders group and had concluded that we should cancel the Church Weekend Away to Ashburnham. He explained that, due to the ongoing COVID pandemic, the rescheduled June date was not really feasible as some restrictions would still be in place by then. It also didn't seem right to reschedule yet again as it had been very difficult to raise sufficient interest and enthusiasm for the weekend even pre-COVID. The suggestion was made to plan an event or series of events based at home, which would be inexpensive and fully inclusive, to celebrate being back together again, once it is safe to do so. The cost of cancellation would be a loss of £1250 already paid to Ashburnham. Rob proposed this course of action and members agreed unanimously.

### **9. Policy Renewals**

PCC members reviewed the Health & Safety Policy and the Safeguarding Policy and, subject to a number of minor amendments, unanimously approved their renewal.

### **10. Safeguarding**

There had been no safeguarding incidents to report.

### **11. A.O.B**

**a)** Rob reported that Canon Geoff Ververs will be retiring on Easter Sunday and will move from St Paul's. The process to recruit his successor as Non-Stipendiary Team Vicar has begun.

**b)** John Allen gave a brief update on the work of Beth Powell as Children's Worker and the PCC were encouraged by the quality of work in such difficult circumstances.

Next PCC Meeting: Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 8pm

The meeting concluded at 9.45pm with the Grace.