

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, MALDEN
Registered Charity No.1145155
Minutes of the 754th meeting of the Parochial Church Council
At 7.30 p.m. on
Tuesday, December 6th 2022
In the coffee lounge

PRESENT, Rev Michael Roper as chair, Anthony Pullen, Rev Milly Broome, Mike Broome, Liz Pullen, Richard Burkett, Marilyn Burkett, Margaret Barrington, Sally Josolyne. Chris Benson, Barry Eaton, Deborah Harris

In attendance: Sally Pusey (secretary)

7560 1 – Apologies from Lynn Sanger

7561 2 - NOTICE OF ESSENTIAL AOB
Barry, Streaming of services.

7562 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
The November minutes were checked and signed.

7563 4 – VICARS REPORT

-The Remembrance service with parade was a success. More children and parents came back afterwards for refreshments. Hospitality is the key.

-Christmas gives us the chance to engage with people who don't normally come to church. The carol service, crib service gives people the opportunity to feel they belong.

-Little Fishes numbers are increasing and they are back in a pattern of the first Sunday of the month

-Warm spaces-We are thinking about possibly opening the hall if the weather turned really bad as a safe and warm space for people to gather. We may register tea/chat and the Saturday morning open church as Warm welcome spaces too.

7564 5 –CHRISTMAS PLANS

Baby Jesus has started his travels around the parish and the messy Christingle is all set for this coming Sunday.

-The All Age service on the 18th December has children serving and will be followed by 9 lessons and carols in the evening.

-Margaret has done a great job in rewriting the crib service and then we have midnight Mass and Christmas morning services.

-We will monitor how many people attend the 8am on Christmas Day to consider whether we will continue with it going forward.

-The lane is unlikely to be sorted before Christmas and is in a very bad state of repair and very dark at night. We need to be aware of the potential of accidents happening as people aren't used to walking up it in the dark. We should provide stewards with lights for the evening services. **Mike and Lynn** will look at arranging stewards. Mike said that the PCC needs to take more responsibility about issues of health and safety. For example sorting out the lane and the safety of the heater under the bench seat in the coffee lounge re the safety of children using the coffee lounge. Richard pointed out that if a committee has been given a budget for work that needs doing that budget comes with permission so they can and should go ahead and do any work relating to health and safety as soon as possible.

-The Angel Project is underway. £640 has come in and there was £1200 already in the fund.

-There will be a pre lit Christmas prayer tree in church but the Yule tree decorating competition will not be going ahead.

7565 6 SAFEGUARDING

Milly will speak to Sally about a person who will need a new DBS.

7566 7 – FINANCE – USE OF RESERVES

Richard reported at the end of October, the year to date, general fund figure, showed a surplus of £4,800. There are however more expenses to come. £4,200 for the fallen oak tree work, the quinquennial fees, £2,000 mission giving, lane work £1,200 and an additional £1,500 gas and electricity payments. This all amounts to £9,900 so at year end there will be a deficit of about £5000.

It has been a very hard year so that deficit is not a bad figure at all.

Some good news is that we should be getting £1400 from the diocese in December from the energy support fund.

Giving- 1 giver has halved their giving and sadly 1 has stopped. The recent stewardship campaign, supported by Michael's sermon on the 3rd October, disappointingly only resulted in 12 replies. The replies included 1 new person, 5 increases and 6 who stayed the same.

PGS-**Mike B** asked where we were with the roll out of the Parish Giving Scheme.

Richard reported that 7 people had joined so far and that 4 of them had opted for the inflationary increase. The gift aid via the PGS scheme is coming in as it should be.

Alastair is asking for help with spreadsheets etc. to keep a track of people moving over from the original giving scheme to PGS. If anyone is good with spreadsheets or knows anyone else is and is willing to assist Alastair that would be very helpful.

Next the PGs scheme will be rolled out to church committee members and then to targeted members of the congregation.

Next year we would have looked to set a balanced budget but energy prices are a big problem.

Last year our gas and electricity charges in total were £2000. This year, without turning on the gas and electricity at all the standing charges alone are £2,600.

We reported at the last PCC that we had been told we qualified for the government business energy relief scheme. We have now been told by our provider that we may not qualify and we are now awaiting an update from the supplier. We are classed as

business not domestic so the energy rebate system is very different for us. The roll out for the energy relief scheme is supposed to be in December. The relief we got on the October electricity bill was only 0.21p/kWh which made little significant difference – a discount of £2.19 in a bill of £317.

Richard has looked in to a couple of new energy providers to see if there was anything cheaper out there but it seems we are better off staying with Total Gas and Power.

We don't know what will happen with energy prices after April. Our bills could go from £2000 to £9000 next year, less the £1400 from the energy support fund so a difference of £5600 before any relief we may get from the government.

Chris B asked if any more thought had been given to replacing bulbs with LEDs .

Richard said that would be discussed with the maintenance committee.

Parish support fund of £72,000 has been agreed with conditions that it will depend on how much we are hit with the energy price increases as to whether we can afford to pay the whole amount.

The PCC recorded thanks to Richard and the Finance Committee for all their hard work.

Epiphany gifts will be launched in January where people can donate to buy candles, wafers, communion wine etc . **Richard** will write something to go in OMN about it.

The Roy Clough legacy fund has £1700 left in it which really needs to be used. £4000 was initially used to install the stair lift after David Owen had spoken to the Clough family who were happy for us to go ahead and spend it and the idea of using the remaining money towards accessibility seems a good idea. It could be used towards making a proper space for wheelchair uses in church, or for improving accessibility for dprs.

7567 8 –WIFI IMPROVEMENT

Current Wifi access is an issue. Rex and Franklin Barrington have been looking at it for us. The quote we have for cabling to sort out the issue is £570 plus Vat. If we require extra cabling for the coffee lounge it will cost an extra £50 plus Vat. We have a family who have offered to pay anything above the £620 required if needed. The PCC agreed to go ahead with this.

7568 9— ST JOHNS HALL-HALL COMMITTEE REPORT

The hall is having 4 large windows replaced. The hall committee had 5 quotes and have gone for the lowest. They are still looking for funding to redo the car park surface. They have lost their regular slimming world booking.

7569 10 – -RESTORATION PROJECT

We have the double quinquennial inspections done and they didn't throw up anything unexpected but there are concerns about the Lady Chapel roof not having any covering under the tiles.

The key point at the moment is the grants committee, who are doing a great job, are being asked if we have a faculty in place to start the restoration work. The grant providers won't release money if we don't have a faculty, planning permission etc. in place. Alex says we should have it by the end of March which is a tight time frame but the grants committee have been updated with this information at a recent meeting with Mike B. Kirsty will review the spreadsheet regarding who we can contact for grants so that in the spring we will be ready to push for more grants.

Drainage- Originally Charles Sheppard had said the drainage work would be approximately up to £72000. The first quote has come in at £120,000. Another quote has been sought and we are waiting for this. Unfortunately as the contractors are talking to the drainage designers this has meant we have incurred an additional consultancy fee of £470.

Alex has said that French drains around the perimeter of the church will help the external walls of the church but not the internal centre of the church as the pillars in church act as wicks bringing up moisture from below.

The Grants committee are meeting again after Christmas.

It was suggested we could have a dedicated website for the restoration project to show how it's going and it will also help with accessing the grant making bodies as they look at how we are liaising with the community.

7570 11- COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE/ST JOHNS WEBSITE

The committee met last week –minutes to follow. The Angel Project, with a donate link, is on the website as is all the Christmas service information.

Sally J has been looking at how we overhaul the way we share internal documents, etc. within the parish to make them safer and more secure. Sally has used out not for profit google account with which we get 32GB free of space in google drive. We can control who has access and who can download folders/documents. It will keep our data secure. If other committees would like the same thing done for them to share then **Sally J** is happy to do that.

7571 12-ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Barry reminded us that in 2025 will mark the 150th anniversary of the main Nave. It falls on December 7th 2025 which is a Sunday so maybe we could organise a fundraising or music event.

Streaming-We are back streaming each week but there are issues with the quality of the equipment being used. We also could do with some extra help to cover all the Christmas services. The streaming team have been busy so haven't had the opportunity to look at updating the equipment.

There are 4 to 5 people who watch live each week and post the event there are approx. 23 to 60 views sometimes reaching 100.

The Queen Elizabeth memorial service had 112 views. The remembrance service was also well viewed and the all age services are also picking up quite a few views.

We need more people to join the streaming team.

We closed with prayer

The next meeting will be on the Tuesday January 3rd at **7.30pm** in the coffee lounge.