



Minutes of the Parochial Church Council

Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 19.30

Committee Room

In the chair: Joan Ridgway (JR)

Minutes: Jill Mather

Present: Caroline Adams (CA), Tim Bayton (TB), Susan Coombs (SC), Stuart Macwilliam (SM), Rachel Martindill (RM), Jill Mather (JMM), Andrew Mimmack (AM), Gary Patch (GP), Mike Payne (MGP), Marilyn Pegg (MP), Fr Martin Poolton (Fr M), Fr Henry Pryse (Fr H), Joan Ridgway (JR), Nigel Ridgway (NR)

1. **Opening prayer** and welcome to the new PCC

Fr H opened the meeting, praying a Collect for Rogationtide.

2. **Apologies:** Anita Atherton (AA), Louise Spencer (LS), Jim Weeks (JW), Nigel Williams (NW).

3. **Co-options to PCC and election of Standing Committee**

- i. JR welcomed Gary Patch to his first meeting.
- ii. Jill Mather (Secretary) and Nigel Ridgway (Treasurer) were co-opted (proposed CA, seconded SM).
- iii. The Standing Committee was elected: Fr H (Chair), Fr M, AM, RM, JR, NR, CA, JMM.

4. **Responsibilities of the PCC**

- i. AM reminded the meeting of the legal responsibilities of PCC members: as St James' is a charity, members of the PCC carry out the duties of legal trustees. As long as the PCC acts "in good faith", it is covered by indemnity insurance.
- ii. CA added that the PCC is also responsible for ensuring all safeguarding policies and practices are in place at St James'.

5. **Dates of PCC meetings**

Dates of meeting were approved as circulated with the change from 3rd October to 19th September. (Proposed SM, seconded TB, approved by majority).

- 6. Correspondence** (previously circulated by email) was received.
- 7. The Minutes** of the PCC meeting (28.02.23) were approved, and the notes from the extra PCC meeting (22.03.23) and Standing Committee were received. (Proposed AM, seconded SM, approved unanimously.)

JMM thanked TB for taking the minutes at the February meeting.

8. Questions and matters arising the Minutes of the PCC meeting (28.02.23)

- i. Minute 5iii: no action yet on the Hall Master booking system.
- ii. Minute 5vii: the rough sleeper continues to sleep in the grounds but is due to move on next month.
- iii. Minute 5viii: Mill House has been booked for 16.09.23.
- iv. Minute 6iii: Fr H has opened discussions with Stoke Hill schools.
- v. Minute 6iv: Fr H reported that the monthly coffee morning was now attracting more newcomers.
- vi. Minute 8: CA reported that the review of forms for hall-users had been completed.
- vii. Minute 11i: a sign has been attached to the gender-sharing toilet.

9. Questions and matters arising from the extra PCC meeting (22.03.23)

- i. Fr H had asked Mike Clark if he would be willing to provide us with a summary of his impressions of St James', but he has declined, assuring us, though, of his continuing support and advice. He has accepted the invitation to the St James' Patronal Festival.
- ii. Discussion of next steps: Fr H spoke of drawing up a vision statement, with JR referring to a mission action plan, especially in the light of the new housing being built next to the church in the old Coal Yard site (see Minute 15 vi below).
- iii. There was some talk of the paucity of applications to current vacancies, (including to similar single benefices to our own) and the fact that, despite a recent increase in ordinands in the evangelical sector, some churches in the sacramental tradition were experiencing difficulties in recruitment. The discussion was not pursued, with Fr M reminding the meeting that there was currently no vacancy in our parish.
- iv. GP asked what our next steps might be: mission action planning or planning a parish profile? He asked if the two were mutually exclusive and which should come first.
- v. It was agreed that revisiting the mission action plan should be our starting point, with GP emphasising the need to draw up a plan of steps to take forward and AM agreeing and stressing the need to involve the whole church in the process. TB suggested that the notes from the meeting with Mike Clark might be used to identify key focus areas in our mission planning, with an indication of how each area might be supported.

- vi. **Action: JMM and GP will review the notes from the meeting and bring a draft plan to the July meeting.**

10. Questions and matters arising from the Standing Committee notes

- i. Note 6iii: historic record-keeping. TB asked why this matter was being investigated at this point. JR explained that having recently completed safeguarding training on the Leadership pathways she was concerned that we should safeguard against a situation such as that of Peter Ball (a convicted sex offender) referred to in the training. NR and JR had recommended to the Standing Committee that information was needed should there be such an enquiry in the future. NR was able to assure the PCC that records were now available for the past 25 years for Church officers. SM will further research the archives. CA is meeting with Ann Walsh to produce Sunday School history.

11. Questions and matters arising from the Rector's report

The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by Fr H (see file).

He added that

- i. Mark Davie had been thanked for his years of service as a Lay Reader.
- ii. Kat Parker (from St Andrew's, Cullompton) will be visiting St James' at Pentecost as a first step towards an observational placement at St James'. She will also attend Messy Church.
- iii. Sue Parks is recommended for an Award of St Boniface.
- iv. Liz Grier and Dan O'Hara will be ordained in Exeter Cathedral on 01.07.23.

12. Questions and matters arising from the treasurer's report and financial statements

The PCC received with thanks the reports and financial statements previously submitted by NR (see file). NR apologised that the full accounts were not available as AA was on holiday.

- i. The results for the first quarter to 31.03.23 were positive with a bottom line of £6,871 actual (surplus) against £3,798 budgeted which is ahead of last year.
- ii. Organ appeal & restoration: NR reported that two grant applications are ongoing, but donations received so far are about £2,000 short of the total cost. NR said that it showed how much the organ and choral side of worship were valued.
- iii. RM reported that the Sum Up machine was being successful in generating extra income.
- iv. Raising hall fees in 2024: TB supported a rise in hall fees to make the best use of this valuable asset. NR recommended caution in considering this as the PCC needed to ensure that it does not operate as a business, as it is exempt, as a church, of business rates. It was agreed that NR and RM would investigate the question of raising hall fees and bring a proposal to the PCC based on their research.

- v. JMM asked if church annual events (for example, the nativity play) might be automatically noted in the diary to ensure they are not precluded by other organisations' early bookings.
- vi. Thanks were extended to NR.

13. Questions and matters arising from the safeguarding report

The PCC received with thanks the report and the revised safeguarding policy previously submitted by CA (see file).

- i. Ensuring all DBS certificates are in place and safeguarding training is up to date: CA reported that now that there are children in the choir, it is essential that all choir members undertake training. She will also ensure new PCC members complete training and will follow up the three-year updates due for DBS checks of those working with children.
- ii. Revision of policy: only minor changes (see file report), for example dates, names of diocesan safeguarding officers, updated information on Celebrate Together.
- iii. The revised policy was approved (proposed CA, seconded JR).

14. Questions and matters arising from the churchwardens' report

The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by the churchwardens (see file).

- i. Reminder: Archdeacon's visitation on 11.07.23 at St Matt's, Exeter.

15. Committee reports

Health and Safety

The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by CA (see file).

Fabric Report

The PCC received with thanks the report previously submitted by NR (see file).

- i. The student from Ellen Tinkham School has attended an induction morning with her tutor (who is also a youth worker at Bampton church) supporting the gardening team.
- ii. Paths and disabled ramps: NR explained that in February 2020, quotations had been obtained for the renewal of paths around the church. The path from the car park to the hall was renewed in April 2022 but the path on the north side of the church and the area outside the parish office still require work. NR and NW would like to propose also complementing the two sets of steps with disabled ramps. They plan to enlist support from within the church and to seek grant money available for improvements to disabled access and environmental impact in an area of deprivation (MSO). Matched funding will be needed, so an appeal will be required.
- iii. ***Action: NR and NW will bring a detailed proposal to the next PCC meeting.***
- iv. TB asked about the water damage to the tower plaster. NR assured the PCC that the damage was superficial although it will be important to investigate the water's point of entry in the tower.

- v. Merry Month of May/June (see 6.2 in file report): NR proposed another outreach initiative in 2024 as St James' is stronger for the impact of the May events in 2022. He suggested it might run from Pentecost 2024 throughout June and recommended action soon to book the hall as regular hall-users are already making bookings for 2024. TB supported the idea and suggested that it might be a way of taking on ideas raised in the mission action planning.
- vi. Old Coal Yard development (see 6.3 in file report): work is starting and will be another element to include in our mission planning as there are likely to be 1500 new parishioners by 2025 in this housing project.

Young People

- i. Numbers have been increasing in recent weeks in both JAM and I I-ups.
- ii. 5 new families attended the May Messy Church: 45 children and 25 adults enjoyed the activities and worship.
- iii. CA and JMM attended a Zoom on 02.05.23 to learn about applying for grants for mission to young people through the Mission and Growth Fund. Possibilities they are considering are in the areas of care for the environment (Eco Church) and use of the media in teaching and fellowship.

16. Any other business

- i. Online services: GP wondered if there might be a way of offering a way of giving online as part of the interaction/chat function currently in operation with our online viewers. He will explore this possibility.
- ii. He also asked if it was still necessary to pause the video during the intercessions when the names of those sick were read out. CA replied that it had started during the pandemic and was suggested as a way of protecting identity. It was left for consideration.
- iii. TB asked if all those attending services are aware they are online. RM replied that it is referred to in the Welcome; CA referred to the safeguarding policy in which it is stated that photos of large groups in public are acceptable for publication.

17. Date of next meeting: 04.07.23.

18. Closing prayer

- i. Fr H held Charlotte and Mike Payne in our prayers as Charlotte continues in her process of discernment towards ordination.
- ii. The meeting closed with the Grace at 21.03.

Jill Mather (Secretary to the PCC)