

St Luke's Parish Church - Holmes Chapel

Minutes of the Parochial Church Council meeting held on Monday 1st July 2019

7.30pm, Massey Room, Church Hall

	Actions
<p>Present: Alastair Cragg (Chairman), Val Cragg, Ray Davies, Tim Fryer, Stephen Haigh, William Hall (Treasurer), Trevor Jenkins, Wendy Macdonald, John Oram, Bill Paton, Alan Rickards, Barbara Smith, Steve Smith (Secretary) and Jayne Weaver (Vice-Chairman).</p>	
<p>1 Welcome and Opening – the Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and set the context by reading from Titus 3, v8b-11, followed by prayer.</p>	
<p>2 Apologies for absence – received from Rachel Copley, Peter Cotton, Alison Dale, Fiona Pullé, Anne Smith and Jane Thomson.</p>	
<p>3 Minutes of Council meetings on Monday 29th April and 10th May 2019 – there were no amendments. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meetings – 29th April minutes proposed by Ray Davies, seconded Jayne Weaver; and 10th May minutes, proposed by Val Cragg, seconded by John Oram - and were then signed by the Chairman.</p>	
<p>4 Matters arising from previous Council meetings (not dealt with elsewhere in the agenda):</p>	
<p>a) New incumbent – it had been possible to announce earlier than expected that Revd Canon Rob McLaren currently Vicar of St George's Poynton will become our new incumbent following his installation and induction service at St Luke's at 7.30pm on Friday 22nd November. The announcement had been made at the same time in both parishes and published on our website and Facebook page and in the local press.</p>	
<p>b) Church Organ – Wendy Macdonald reported that she is continuing to investigate possible options to improve the pipe organ in conjunction with the Diocesan Organ Adviser (Revd Andrew Manning) and hopes to report at the next meeting. The Chairman emphasised that any option would involve significant cost and so it was important to encourage donations to the Organ Fund.</p>	Wendy
<p>c) Church Hall Heating - in the absence of Alison Dale, Val Cragg confirmed that the complaints about the difficulty of controlling the heating system in the hall had been discussed at the Hall Committee meeting. Providing a temperature comfortable for all users of the hall is difficult without substantial changes to the fan-blown, warm air system. However it is believed to be operating correctly and has been set to meet the expected needs of using groups.</p>	
<p>d) Church Website – development of the new site is continuing with more page content being added. The Secretary requested more feedback and suggestions about content to himself and Trevor Jenkins.</p>	All
<p>e) Retirement Service for Bishop Peter: Chester Cathedral Sat 20th July - the Secretary reminded the Council that anyone still wishing to attend this special service of Holy Communion should let him know as soon as possible so that tickets could be requested.</p>	All
<p>5 Update on the Interregnum – Jayne reported for the Churchwardens:</p>	
<p>Rob McLaren's Installation and Induction Service at St Luke's will be at 7.30pm on Friday 22nd November at 7.30 and he will take his first services on Sunday 24th November.</p>	
<p>She and Alastair have met with Rob recently and will have further meetings to discuss plans for the services in the autumn and Christmas. We are arranging for the vicarage to be deep cleaned by a commercial contractor before doing some decorating to freshen up the walls and paintwork. We are looking for volunteers to help with painting, so please let me know if you are available.</p>	All
<p>We would like to thank Stephen and Steph Haigh for tackling the garden at the vicarage and gradually returning it to its former glory in advance of Rob and Jean moving in.</p>	

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<p>During July and August Sunday services will be taken by the Revds Martin Oram, Graham Joyce, Howard Eales, Alan Overend, Rick Gates and John Varty.</p> <p>6 Churchwardens' report – Jayne reported for the Wardens' Team:</p> <p>6.1 Standing Committee - the Standing Committee has met several times since the last Council meeting to discuss routine parish matters, special services and Thanksgiving Sunday. Planning for Rob's Induction Service will start soon.</p> <p>6.2 Church Lighting – this project is paused while we review it with the Architects and our new vicar. We will be applying for grant funding to help cover the significant costs of the new lighting.</p> <p>6.3 Church Sound System – we have received a few adverse comments about the sound system again, in particular the microphones and the hearing loop. Further investigations may be required.</p> <p>6.4 Church Annual Inventory – the annual inventory was carried out on 10th May with everything of value accounted for. Thanks to Val Cragg for organising the inventory.</p> <p>6.5 Disposal of Redundant Choir Pews – the choir pews which were removed from church at the time of the chancel reordering are now available for disposal. We will be offering them to the congregation on a “first come, first served” basis and requesting a minimum donation of £35 per pew. The pews are being stored in the mausoleum at the churchyard on Knutsford Road from where they can be viewed and collected. Anyone interested should contact Jayne.</p> <p>6.6 West End Project – we have just received the report commissioned from Bench Architects with six different options for improving safe access to church and optimising space at the West end of the church. These are being reviewed and will be discussed at the next Council meeting in September. Rob will be updated on the plans in due course.</p> <p>6.7 Quinquennial Inspection – the next inspection of the church is scheduled for November 2019 and will be conducted by Bench Architects. The professional fees for the inspection will be met by the Diocese.</p>	<p>Wardens</p> <p>Secretary</p>
<p>7 Parish Weekend: September 25-27th 2020</p> <p>The Chairman informed the Council that Peter and Brenda Shackleton, who have agreed to organise the next Parish Weekend, have asked whether it could be opened to members of the Catholic and Methodist Churches with the aim of achieving greater take-up of the 85 places potentially available at Willersley. He asked for comments from the Council which currently has sole responsibility for underwriting the cost of the weekend.</p> <p>All the comments were supportive, based on strengthening the existing good ecumenical cooperation in the village. Alastair therefore proposed that we should invite the other local Churches to share in the Parish Weekend and communicate this to the Churches Together committee via the Shackletons. Tim Fryer seconded this and the Council agreed the proposal unanimously.</p>	<p>Chairman</p>
<p>8 Financial matters</p> <p>a) Treasurer's Report – William Hall reported as follows:</p> <p>At the end of June, our income was £71,820 which is about £1,000 less than last year and £2,000 less than in 2017. When we reviewed our Planned Giving Scheme this year, we discussed ways to halt the decline in our income. In a congregation like ours, from time to time some givers may need to reduce their giving and some may cease altogether. However, given the expansion of Holmes Chapel, there are signs that newcomers are seeking to join our numbers and we hope they will become full members of our church.</p> <p>Our Parish Share has continued to rise by a figure above inflation and this, coupled with increased utility costs etc., has meant that our expenditure rose at the half year point from £59,185 in 2017 to £68,100 last year. This year, expenditure is £60,321 at the half year or</p>	

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<p>just above the level of 2017 which is very gratifying. It means that we have a surplus of about £11,500 compared to £4,800 in 2018. This is in part due to a reduction in Vicarage expenses – no Council Tax is payable as Cheshire East Council regard the Vicarage as a tied cottage which has saved us about £2,000 so far.</p> <p>We continue to offer to pay visiting clergy during the interregnum, but the fees paid are reimbursed by Chester; a refund of about £750 is due for fees paid in May and June. However, we have to bear the cost of travel expenses when these are claimed.</p> <p>Some years ago, St Luke's received a donation of a stamp collection which Rod Pickles agreed to review and sell. He has achieved some success selling "mint" stamps to a dealer and, together with some of his own stamps, has raised £500 for St Luke's which has been credited to the fabric account. Rod has returned the remaining albums and boxes of stamps to me and provided clues on how to dispose of the remainder which I hope to tackle in due course.</p> <p>b) Parish Giving Report – Jayne reported as follows:</p> <p>In preparation for Thanksgiving Sunday, 114 letters were posted to everyone in the Planned Giving Scheme and to those giving regularly through White Envelopes. In the letters we requested that everybody consider increasing their giving to enable the Church to support Christian causes in the local and wider community. Rick Gates reiterated this message very effectively in his sermon on Thanksgiving Sunday.</p> <p>So far 69 pledge forms have been returned and, of these, 25 people have committed to increase their donations. Six new members joined the Planned Giving Scheme, two transferring from White Envelope giving. As a result of the increased pledges, total Scheme donations should rise by £5,014 (6.7%) for the forthcoming year. Thank you to everybody who is a member of the Planned Giving Scheme for your continued donations which support the work at St Luke's.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked William and Jayne for their reports and invited questions. None were forthcoming.</p> <p>9 Deanery Synod Matters</p> <p>William reported on the meeting of the Synod which he and Barbara Smith had attended on 13th June 2019 at St Bertoline's, Barthomley:</p> <p>The speaker was the Rt Revd Tim Stratford, Dean of Chester Cathedral, who explained his mission is to keep out the wind and the rain so that the cathedral can function throughout the year. Heating the whole building fully is impossible but underfloor heating is being installed in the nave. Solar panels will be installed on parts of the roof during 2019. This is intended to be self-financing.</p> <p>Until 2013, the cathedral charged visitors £4 per person and raised £280K at that time. Since then no charges have been made and voluntary donations from visitors have produced £490K per year. The pay desks will now be replaced by electronic donation points placed near the various historic displays about the building.</p> <p>Tim's aim is to encourage visitors to encounter God, to grow believers in the Church as a whole and not specifically just in Chester. The art displays are intended to intrigue people and help them to ask questions and think about Christianity. He sees the cathedral as the servant of the world Church where the seeds of faith are planted.</p> <p>General news: Bishop Peter is retiring at the end of September and will preside at a special Holy Communion service on 20 July. Assistant Bishop Willie will take confirmations during 2020.</p>	

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<p>The High Sheriff of Chester, Mark Mitchell Esq DL, will be meeting clergy at Elworth on 4th November. David Page is going on a sabbatical to consider if special clergy are needed to carry out funerals across the Diocese.</p> <p>After further discussions, Congleton will now have chapels of ease at Buglawton and Mossley, with parish churches at St Peter's and St Stephen's. Jeff Cuttell will be leaving Astbury on 29 July to take up a part time prison chaplaincy. Our Patron, Tom Shepherd the vicar of Sandbach, is retiring on 29 September.</p> <p>10 Any Other Business</p> <p>10.1 Safeguarding – in the absence of our Safeguarding Officer, Anne Smith, the Secretary reported on a Diocesan Safeguarding training session which Anne had recently attended:</p> <p>This is the second training session provided by the Diocese in recent years attended by Anne and highlighted again the intention and principles upon which Safeguarding in the Church of England is based.</p> <p>We were reminded that safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.</p> <p>As part of the Church's mission in delivering the Gospel, we should seek to embed safeguarding as everyone's responsibility as part of good pastoral care.</p> <p>We should attempt to safeguard children, young people, and children and young people with specific vulnerabilities. Adults and those with specific difficulties, as well as survivors of abuse are also our concern. This concern extends to clergy, church officers, leaders and helpers. In fact, we should seek to safeguard us all.</p> <p>We should attempt to safeguard against abuse in all its forms: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, institutional abuse, discriminatory abuse, financial abuse, domestic abuse and violence, and also spiritual abuse.</p> <p>Recognising abuse requires us to be particularly observant and to notice any changes in behaviour or appearance. Understanding the wide range of types of abuse and being brave enough to share concerns is needed. Seeking advice from the incumbent or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser about what to do next may be needed.</p> <p>It is important that a record of concerns, actions and observations is kept and that it is made clear where any disclosure of abuse or risk of abuse is made that it will have to be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser so that any necessary action can be taken.</p> <p>At St Luke's, names and contact details are given on posters in the church porch, church hall and website for anyone to use who may be concerned about any safeguarding issue. Our policy on safeguarding is also published on the website.</p> <p>12 Date and time of next meeting:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Monday 9 Sep 2019, 7.30pm in the Massey Room</p> <p>13 Close of Meeting – there being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.16pm with the Grace.</p>	