

St Luke's Parish Church - Holmes Chapel

Minutes of the Parochial Church Council meeting held on Monday 11th November 2019

7.30pm, Massey Room, Church Hall

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<p>Present: Alastair Cragg (Chairman), Val Cragg, Rachel Copley, Peter Cotton, Ray Davies, Tim Fryer, Stephen Haigh, William Hall (Treasurer), Trevor Jenkins, Wendy Macdonald, John Oram, Bill Paton, Fiona Pullé, Alan Rickards, Anne Smith, Barbara Smith, Steve Smith (Secretary), Jane Thomson and Jayne Weaver (Vice-Chairman); Revd Rob McLaren was also in attendance.</p>	
<p>1 Welcome and Opening – the Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting including our soon to be installed new vicar, Rob McLaren, who was attending the meeting informally before his induction. Alastair then set the context by reading verses 9-11 of Psalm 119 followed by an introductory prayer.</p>	
<p>2 Apologies for absence – received from Alison Dale.</p>	
<p>3 Minutes of Council meeting on Monday 9th September 2019 – the Secretary pointed out an error in the AOB section 9.5 in the version +already circulated. This had misstated the length of Anne Smith's period as a Licensed Reader. The correct period is eight years. With this correction, the minutes were adopted as a true record of the meeting (as proposed by Alan Rickards and seconded by Ray Davies) and were signed by the Chairman.</p>	
<p>4 Matters arising from previous Council meeting</p> <p>a) General – Darren Cottier has been approached to help in a sidesman role at the 8.30 services. He and Alison Dale may serve as required on an occasional basis and consider formal appointment at the next annual meeting. A small number of large print copies of Common Worship Order 1 Holy Communion have now been obtained for use mainly at the mid-week service. Large print copies of Order 2 are not available.</p> <p>b) Church Organ – Wendy Macdonald highlighted the main points from her short paper¹, which summarised the current position. Our present organ is failing (several notes/stops faulty) and needs significant repair and cleaning at an estimated cost of £35,000 (as advised by Cartwrights who installed and have maintained the organ so far). The Diocesan Organ Advisor (DOA) has advised against expenditure on the present organ as it is a poor instrument and will not be improved. Instead he advises replacing it with a suitable pipe or digital organ. A good quality digital instrument would cost £40-50,000 and have a lifetime of 20-25 years whereas a pipe organ would last substantially longer.</p> <p>The soon to be redundant pipe organ in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Heswall, is a good quality instrument and potentially available to us for a final donation of £1,000 – an initial £300 donation has already been made to demonstrate our continuing interest in possibly acquiring the instrument. David Wells, specialist organ builders of Liverpool, have quoted the cost of restoring the Heswall organ and installing it at St Luke's as £50,000. If we proceeded, the instrument would have to be installed in the NE corner of the nave (where the pipe organ used to be until the early '70s and where the console is now) and so there would need to be some alterations to the chancel platform. However, removing the existing pipes from their position on the West Gallery would free up space for seating and provide a second entrance/exit to the bell-ringing room.</p> <p>A general discussion followed in which broad support was expressed for acquiring the Heswall organ if possible. Although the indicated costs are significant, it was felt they were achievable and several suggestions were made about fund-raising. Heswall PCC are about to seek faculty permission to demolish their existing church and rebuild it next year and so need to know our intentions regarding acquisition of their pipe organ.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Wendy, Peter and Stephen for the work they had done in evaluating the possibilities. Considerable progress has been made in checking the feasibility and likely cost of installing the Heswall organ in St Luke's, but there are still aspects to be clarified such</p>	

¹ Copy attached; circulated to the Council before the meeting.

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<p>as the cost of modifying the platform and the visual impact of relocating the organ. Also, it was important that Rob could be properly informed and support the proposal before a fully informed firm decision could be taken. However, it should be possible to do this by the next Council meeting. A further visit to view and hear the Heswall organ would be arranged as soon as possible and a further letter sent to Heswall PCC explaining the reasons for the delay.</p> <p>c) Parish Weekend: September 25-27th 2020 – Peter and Brenda Shackleton have met Rob and discussed ideas for the format and theme and will make a specific proposal for the next Council meeting. The weekend will remain a St Luke’s event but will be open to members of other local Churches.</p> <p>Rob then took the opportunity to thank Alastair and Jayne and everyone who had worked so hard to welcome him and Jean into the parish and their new home in the vicarage. They are looking forward to their life and work with us. He expects to spend the first year meeting and listening to parishioners and praying for his and Jean’s ministry. As a start, and to express their thanks in a practical way, they would like to invite as many people as possible to come to an open evening at the vicarage on Saturday 21st December.</p> <p>5 Update on the Interregnum – <i>Jayne Weaver gave the final report for the Churchwardens:</i></p> <p>Rob and Jean McLaren moved into the Vicarage at the end of October. Before their move, a small team of volunteers from the parish (and Jean herself) freshened up the paint on the walls and ceilings, and Stephen and Steph Haigh finished their work on the garden. She thanked everyone for their recent help and for looking after the vicarage during the interregnum.</p> <p>Work is due to start soon on building the new vicarage in the existing grounds with a scheduled completion date of late summer 2020.</p> <p>6 Churchwardens’ report – <i>Jayne reported on items 1-5 and Val Cragg on item 6:</i></p> <p>6.1 Standing Committee - the Standing Committee has met twice since the last Council meeting and has discussed arrangements for regular services, baptisms and those over the Christmas period. Planning for the Institution and Induction service on Friday 22nd November to install Rob as our new vicar has continued. There will be a rehearsal in church for everyone directly involved at 7pm on Monday 18th November.</p> <p>6.2 Church Lighting – this project remains high priority but awaits review with Rob and then with Bench Architects.</p> <p>6.3 Wireless Microphone – the Chairman has purchased a handheld wireless microphone at a cost of £250 (plus installation) for use in church, initially during the induction service and later whenever a roving microphone is needed.</p> <p>6.4 Quinquennial Inspection – this regular detailed inspection of the condition of the fabric of the church will be carried out by Bench Architects on Friday 13th December. Their fee for the inspection is paid for by the Diocese.</p> <p>6.5 Leak from the Tower Roof – a small water leak onto the bells has been investigated. It appears to result from a blocked gutter on the tower roof following the recent heavy rains rather than any failure in the lead cladding. The tower roof gutters will be fully cleared once the weather improves.</p> <p>6.6 Electrical Testing – the annual PAT checks and the 5-year electrical circuit check of the Church Hall will be arranged from the end of November with our usual electricians, ABC Electrix. Checks will also be carried out at the same time on the electrical circuits and portable appliances in the church.</p> <p>7 Treasurer’s Report – <i>William Hall reported as follows:</i></p> <p>Overall position - income for the last two months was £16,520 with expenditure at £19,849, leaving a shortfall of £3,329. The overall surplus at the end of October is £4,912 and, barring unexpected expenditure, we should finish the year with a small net surplus.</p>	<p>Secretary Stephen Halgh Wendy Macdonald</p> <p>Secretary</p> <p>Val Cragg</p>

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<p>Looking forward to 2020, we now know that our parish Share will rise again by 2.5% from £78542 this year to £80,505 next year. We shall have to take this into account when preparing next year's budget.</p> <p>Remembrance Sunday – the collection donated to the Royal British Legion taken at the Remembrance Service this year was £407, significantly down from last year's centenary figure of £641. Despite last year's unusually high figure, the trend is for our annual donation to gradually decline: £440 in 2017 and £421 in 2016.</p> <p>Organ Funding - after recent donations, the Organ fund now stands at £4,537.</p> <p>Charitable Giving - for many years we have made a cash donation to St Luke's Brinnington to help them maintain their parish work. They now have a new Rector in charge, Revd Lynne Cullen, who also presides over Stockport St Mary and Stockport St Thomas. I propose that we continue our policy and donate £1,250 to the Brinnington PCC this year.</p> <p>We regularly visit Brinnington to take donations of clothing and bedding etc in good condition to be sold at their weekly sales. Donations of suitable items can be left in our church porch. Their annual fair is at the end of this month and donations of bric-a-brac, tombola items, books, toiletries, jewellery and toys are welcome.</p> <p><i>The Chairman seconded the proposal to donate £1,250 to Brinnington PCC which was adopted unanimously by the Council.</i></p> <p>Last year the PCC provided £250 from our Cranage Education Fund to Olivia Middleweek of Genesis to help her fundraising of £2,000 needed to visit Slovenia as part of International Opportunities in Girlguiding. The Education Fund currently stands at £1905 and it is likely that we may be approached to assist others young people from our church community in fundraising for similar Girlguiding opportunities in Nepal and Poland. Any such approaches would be referred back to the Council for approval.</p> <p><i>The Chairman thanked William for his report and invited questions. None were forthcoming.</i></p> <p>8 Deanery Synod Matters – Barbara Smith gave a detailed report of the Deanery Synod on 16th October 2019 at St James, Congleton, which both she and William had attended. The main item was hearing two of the recently appointed clergy in the deanery, Revd Daran Ward (Christ Church, Alsager) and Revd Michelle Goodrich (St Mary Magdalene, Alsager) speak about: “When I had a proper job”.</p> <p>The Deanery Treasurer, Albert Crew, reported that funds are dwindling – the Deanery current account stands at about £1,000 - and so there may need to be a modest levy on parishes in 2020 - the first for four years.</p> <p>Peter Hart reported about the General Synod. Items included simplification of the Church Representation Rules 2011, a £2 on-line betting limit, youth violence, clergy wellbeing, Covenant with the Methodists, “Setting God's People Free” mission, same sex marriage, seal of the confessional, and the appointment of the new Bishop of Chester in 2020.</p> <p>The Rural Dean, Steve Clapham, reported on various other matters. Two men and two women from the Diocese are to receive Royal Maundy money in 2020 and nominations are requested of suitable recipients over the age of 70. Churches are advised to consider how best they might respond in the event of the death of a senior member of the Royal Family. A new process for Safeguarding is to be introduced. A group of Melanesian bishops will visit the Diocese in the summer of 2020 and parishes are asked to consider how best to involve them after their conference at Foxhill.</p> <p>Within the Deanery, there are recent vacancies at Sandbach St Mary and Barthomley St Bertoline. Astbury and Smallwood are about to interview candidates. There have been no applicants so far for the vacancy in the Congleton Team Parish but Nic Blackmore has been appointed as its Children and Families Missioner. The request by the Deanery Synod to discuss when faculty fees should be levied on parishes is to be on the agenda of the next Diocesan Synod.</p>	

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<p>In 2020, the Deanery Synod will meet on 6th February at Christ Church, Alsager, then on 8th June at St Luke's, Goostrey, and again on 13th October (venue to be arranged).</p> <p>9 Any Other Business</p> <p>9.1 The Knitted Bible² – Fiona Pullé drew attention to this excellent collection of 33 knitted scenes from the Bible which had been produced by St George's United Reform Church in Hartlepool. It has already been displayed at churches all over the country. There is no charge but the collection would need to be collected by van. She agreed to see if a suitable date could be secured for a display at St Luke's which could be used as a fundraiser. She also mentioned other possibilities for fundraising based on the parable of the talents.</p> <p>9.2 Gallery Occupancy – Barbara Smith expressed her concerns about occupancy of the Gallery for large services such as the recent Remembrance Service. Access is difficult and unsuitable for the elderly or very young with poor visibility except from the front box pews. The Chairman noted her concerns but said that the duty wardens and sidesmen did their best to dissuade people from using the Gallery whilst seats remained in the main body of the church. That had been the case at the recent Remembrance Service with some late comers insisting on using the Gallery.</p> <p>9.3 Journey into Light - The Secretary had received information about this art exhibition featuring 40+ individual items of artwork produced by prisoners at Styal and Thorn Cross prisons. The exhibition has already been on display in the Cathedral and various churches in the Diocese. The final exhibition will be on 17th Dec from 6pm at St George's, Stockport and all parishes are invited to attend. We are also invited to contribute to the Christmas gift collection for the prisoners at Styal and Thorn Cross using the paper gift bags received by the Secretary. Val Cragg offered to discuss with the MU how St Luke's might take part.</p> <p>9.4 Social Committee – Rachel Copley mentioned that the Social Committee wished to issue a questionnaire to find out what sort of social events people would like to attend. The Council supported this.</p> <p>9.5 Interregnum Clergy Recognition – Tim Fryer enquired whether any special recognition was planned for the clergy who had provided regular help in leading services during the interregnum. The Chairman confirmed that a dinner was planned for all those who had played a major contribution in ensuring no services needed to be cancelled during the vacancy.</p> <p>10 Date and time of future meetings:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Monday 13 January 2020 and 9 March 2020, at 7.30pm in the Massey Room.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Annual Church Meetings – Sunday 19th April 2020 at 9.30am in the church.</p> <p>11 Close of Meeting – there being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm with the Grace.</p>	<p>Fiona Pullé</p> <p>Val Cragg</p>

² See details and places where it has been and is scheduled to be displayed: <http://www.stgeorgesurc.co.uk/the-knitted-bible/>

THE ORGAN AT ST LUKE'S

EXISTING ORGAN

Repairs and cleaning required. Estimated cost £35,000.

Diocesan Organ Adviser advises against spending any money on this organ as it is a poor instrument and will not be improved. This has been confirmed by another organ builder.

Options are:

1. replacement pipe organ
2. digital organ

The DOA advises that a digital organ might be cheaper in the short-term, but would be more expensive in the long-term as well as providing a less satisfying quality of sound. A good instrument could cost approx. £40,000 - £50,000 and last for 20-25 years. A pipe organ will last considerably longer.

OPPORTUNITY FOR REPLACEMENT

An opportunity has arisen to acquire a replacement pipe organ from the Church of the Good Shepherd, Heswall. This instrument is in good order, approx. 50 years old and available for a donation of £1,000 to the church plus installation costs.

Restoration and installation costs are estimated at £50,000. We would also need to cover the removal of the existing organ, and architect and fabrication costs of casing. We therefore need to consider this project at a cost of £60,000. It would need to be installed in the chancel where the current organ console is sited (until the 1970s, the existing organ was in that position).

The DOA advises that this is an opportunity to acquire a good quality organ of the estimated value of £250,000 and that he hopes that we have the vision to go for this.

Reasons for obtaining this organ:

Existing organ deteriorating but not worth spending money on: currently missing notes which can't be rectified without substantial dismantling; some inaccessible pipes can't be tuned effectively.
Opportunity to gain a good quality organ, which if new today would cost approx. £250,000;
Investment for future at St Luke's.

We have expressed an interest in this organ but need approval at St Luke's to take this further. The Church of the Good Shepherd plan to apply for a faculty in December to remove the organ and demolish the church towards the end of 2020. St Luke's would need a faculty so there is a relatively short time available to decide in principle whether, or not, to go ahead. If we decide to go for this organ, there would be some time before its installation. It would be available for removal from Heswall towards the end of next year, organ builders would carry out some refurbishment work before installing it. They estimate 5 months from removal to completion of the installation.

FUNDING Fundraising has been started towards the cost of whatever is decided.
The existing organ fund has approx. £5,000. Autumn recitals on track to raise £500.

Other ideas:

Request donations from individuals and businesses, with fundraising page including Gift Aid

Grants – several possible sources, but applications after a faculty has been agreed

Events – Organ/music marathon, Music Festival, Recitals

WM 7/11/19