

St Luke's Parish Church - Holmes Chapel

Minutes of the Parochial Church Council Zoom meeting

Monday 21st September 2020 7.30pm

		Actions
	Present: Canon Rob McLaren (Vicar and Chairman), Alastair Cragg, Jayne Weaver, Rachel Copley, Peter Cotton, Val Cragg, Tim Fryer, Stephen Haigh, William Hall (Treasurer), Trevor Jenkins, Wendy Macdonald, John Oram, Alan Rickards, Barbara Smith and Steve Smith (Secretary).	
1	Welcome and Opening – the Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayers.	
2	Apologies for absence – received from Alison Dale, Ray Davies, Bill Paton, Fiona Pullé and Jane Thomson.	
3	Minutes of meeting on Monday 20th July 2020 – these had been circulated and were adopted as a true record of the meeting (as proposed by Peter Cotton and seconded by Jayne Weaver); they will be signed by the Chairman in due course.	
4	Matters arising from previous meeting (not dealt with on rest of agenda) – the Chairman informed that Yvonne Janvier had decided not to pursue readership training at this time.	
5	Chairman's report - progress on the new vicarage is excellent and, after some remaining problems with connecting utilities, Rob and Jean will be moving in at the end of the month. Within the parish, there is good progress on pastoral and evangelistic matters with discussion groups restarting through Zoom. It was good to be able to resume limited services of corporate worship in church on Wednesday and Sunday mornings from the end of August. The Genesis children are meeting regularly through Zoom and some of the older children (10-12 years) have met several times in June/July in a new Zoom group named Exodus with more focused teaching.	
6	Standing Committee, Churchwardens', and Treasurer's Reports <i>These Reports (appendix 1 and 2) had been circulated before the meeting and were taken as read. There were no specific questions.</i> Jayne added that help was needed with sacristan duties at the Wednesday 10.30 am communion service. William added his thanks to the parishioners who had delivered their regular giving to him at his home in cash or by cheque. <i>The Chairman thanked Alastair, Jayne, and William for their continuing efficient management of parish affairs and finances during this difficult period. There were no questions from other Council members.</i>	
7	Accounts: PCC financial statements for calendar year 2019 <i>These had been circulated to the Council before the meeting, both as a full set and in short form.</i>	

	<p>The Chairman asked whether there were any specific questions about the accounts. There were none. Alastair proposed that the accounts for 2019 as circulated be adopted by the Council. Barbara Smith seconded the proposal which was carried <i>nem con</i>.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Replacement of organ – <i>the Secretary provided an update:</i></p> <p>Following the 20th July Council meeting, Cartwrights were informed of our acceptance of their proposal, subject to necessary faculty permission being granted. Cartwrights confirmed that they could remove the Heswall organ for secure storage and eventual refurbishment in their workshops in the second week of October at a cost of £2,800, as an initial payment of the overall quoted project price.</p> <p>The DAC met on 18th Sep. and broadly supported our application for faculty permission to replace our existing organ with that from the Church of the Good Shepherd, Heswall, according to the Cartwright’s proposal. The application is currently with the required consultees (Church Buildings Council, Historic England, Georgian Group and Victorian Society) for any comments – they have six weeks from Sep 10th to do this before the application can progress further. However, Heswall’s own faculty application to demolish their church and allow us to remove the organ is in the late formal stages but is still not granted.</p> <p>An Organ & Lighting Appeal Group has been set up to focus on raising the necessary monies to complete the organ replacement and the church internal lighting project – comprising: as core members, Rob, William, Steve and Peter, plus Mike Street and one or two others. The Standing Committee decided that the appeal target should be £80,000. The PCC Organ Committee will continue to oversee the removal of our existing organ and its replacement with the refurbished Heswall organ.</p> <p>A suitable appeal leaflet has been agreed and designed for us at no charge by Philip Hope, a graphic designer. Copies are now being printed. Trevor Jenkins has kindly set up an appeal website for us at https://stlukesappeal.uk and arrangements have been made for secure online donations through the TotalGiving website for using Donation Manager software which is free to registered charities.</p> <p><i>The Chairman thanked all those involved in moving this project forward. The Appeal will first be made to our church members during October and be launched on Harvest Sunday before extending it to the wider community. Copies of the appeal leaflet will be included together with a Harvest letter being delivered by hand to those folks without Zoom access as well as being sent to the 140+ on our email list.</i></p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>COVID-19 restrictions – the Chairman briefly introduced a discussion of the impact of the restrictions and future plans under these headings and invited comments:</p> <p>a) Limited services in church – the experimental reintroduction of limited services of Holy Communion on Wednesday and Sunday mornings has been well received and we have now reconnected with several church members not on email. Attendance has been good and well within our maximum permitted safe occupancy of 30-33 (15+ Wednesdays, 20+ Sundays). Compliance with COVID-19 restrictions such as social distancing is good. The lists of attendees at services are being destroyed after 21 days. As we had hoped, those attending are largely folk without internet capability or those uncomfortable with joining Zoom services. Attendance at the latter continued to be good (35+ screens joining). Keeping in contact through our networkers with those who are house-bound and not on the internet, remains a priority. The later Sunday service times of 9am and 10,30am seem to be working.</p>	

	<p>The Council agreed to continue the limited services during October.</p> <p>b) Church Groups – Tim Fryer reported that the Monday evening house group was meeting more frequently by Zoom and had now expanded to 12 regular members which is probably the maximum. He suggested that perhaps a further house group could now be formed. Wendy Macdonald thanked William Hall for singing in the services in church when congregational singing is not yet permitted. She hoped that it would be possible to have a group of two or three singers at the Remembrance Day service.</p> <p>c) Church Hall – the Standing Committee has reviewed the extensive requirements needed to open the Hall for public use and believes that we are unable to comply, especially with cleaning arrangements between opening sessions and the need for general supervision. Consequently, the Hall must remain closed for bookings now. Several members of the Church Hall Committee wish to stand down or reduce their involvement and new members are urgently needed. This will be discussed by the Standing Committee</p> <p>d) Parish Magazine – Alan Rickards reported that he expected to be able to produce the Magazine in paper form again with the November issue. The Print Room in Church Walk has agreed to carry out the printing now that our previous Macclesfield based printers have closed. Alan has spoken to Sue Wood who has coordinated Magazine delivery and she is confident that this will be possible. Consequently, the last issue of the web-based e-Magazine will be in October. He expressed his thanks to Trevor Jenkins who had set up the e-Magazine and had helped him with its production. Alan proposed to give a discount to Magazine advertisers for the five months when print versions weren't produced.</p>	Standing Committee
10	<p>Annual Meetings – 25th Oct: arrangements - the Secretary outlined some of the arrangements for the Meeting to elect our Churchwardens (Vestry Meeting) and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). It was not yet clear whether these could be held “in person” or “virtually” through Zoom or a hybrid arrangement of both. At the Vestry Meeting, which can be attended by any civil elector living in Holmes Chapel, we expect that Alastair and Jayne will be standing for election for a further year.</p> <p>At the APCM we will be electing five lay members to the Council, our Assistant Churchwardens (we expect that the current three will be standing) and our representatives on the Congleton Deanery Synod (we expect that our current representatives, Barbara Smith and William Hall, and additionally Tim Fryer, will be standing¹). Regarding election of lay members to the Council, both Jane Thomson and Bill Paton have advised that they are resigning from the Council for personal reasons.</p> <p><i>The Chairman asked that thanks be recorded to both Jane and Bill for their long and considerable service to St Luke's and the Church Council. This was warmly endorsed by all those present.</i></p>	
11	Any other business -- no items had been received	
12	Date and time next Council meeting: Monday Nov 9th – for the appointment of Sidesmen and other Church Council Officers	
13	Close of Meeting – there being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting with prayers and the Grace at 8.55pm.	

¹ Post meeting note: we were advised by the Diocese that we are entitled to elect four representatives to the Deanery Synod

Appendix 1 – minutes of PCC meeting 21 Sep 20

Standing Committee and Churchwardens' Report

Standing Committee

Since the last PCC meeting in July the standing committee have met via Zoom on 6th August and in person on 3rd September to conduct routine parish business.

APCM - The APCM is planned for Sunday 25th October at 4pm in church. This arrangement needs to be kept under review to meet current coronavirus restrictions on meetings.

Church magazine - The Church magazine has been produced in a restricted format on the website during the lockdown. The Standing committee discussed the resumption of the printed version of the Church magazine and unanimously agreed that this should happen as soon as practical. Alan Rickards is in discussion with the Print Room to print the magazine as the previous printers have retired from business. We are looking forward to the resumption of the printed magazine in late autumn.

Organ and lighting appeal - The organ and lighting appeal for £80,000 and the publicity leaflet was approved by the Standing Committee, ready for the launch in October. Trevor Jenkins and Steve Smith are developing a website at <https://stlukesappeal.uk> to accept online donations to the appeal. A small group was formed to manage the appeal: Rob McLaren, Steve Smith, William Hall, and Mike Street.

QI Report - The draft Quinquennial Inspection report has now been received from our architects, Bench. This will be discussed by the Standing Committee and necessary repairs to the church building will be prioritised.

Church Hall - The Church Hall will remain closed for bookings for the foreseeable future. A Special Meeting will be called with the Church Hall sub-committee to discuss future bookings for the Hall.

Mausoleum - The Mausoleum at the Knutsford Road Churchyard has been cleared by Mike Street and David Peake and the redundant church furniture and the Rose Fete games have been sent to auction. Mike also cleaned the inside of the Mausoleum, dispatching some very ancient cobwebs. The funds raised from the auction will go to the organ and lighting appeal and will be known at the end of September. Our thanks to Mike and David for their work on the Mausoleum.

Refurbished Chairs - Barbara and Mike Street have arranged and financed the refurbishment of two nineteenth century chairs which had been removed from church and were being stored in the Mausoleum. Barbara and Mike chose fabric colours to match the original upholstery of the chairs. The restoration of the chairs has been completed and chairs are now installed in the chancel on either side of the communion table. Thank you to Barbara and Mike for rescuing these magnificent chairs.

Gardening at the Knutsford Road Churchyard - We had a good turnout for the working party to tidy the area around the cremated remains at the Knutsford Road Churchyard on Saturday 5th September. Seven people came and successfully maintained social distancing. This was the last working party of the year, the next one will be arranged in Spring.

Alastair Cragg and Jayne Weaver, Churchwardens 15/09/20

Appendix 2 - minutes of PCC meeting 21 Sep 20

Treasurer's Report

General

The prospect of a return to church in August has been greeted by relief for many of our members and with the resumption of "normal" church funerals our finances have improved. However, during July our income was restricted to those who donated by standing order or delivered their envelopes to me personally.

As a result, we had a deficit of £2701 in July but a surplus of £1,127 in August resulting in an overall surplus of £4,381 at the end of August. The continued Coronavirus restrictions which restrict the number of persons allowed to take part in the services continues to affect our weekly income in September as many members do not bring their envelopes each week and instead save them up for several weeks at a time.

One of the results of the lockdown has been a rise in the number of our members donating by standing order which now amounts to 75% of our total planned giving. It is good to see more people coming forward to be regular givers to replace those whose donations have ceased for various reasons.

I have been able to obtain a grant under the Listed Places of Worship scheme of £230.20.

Our Organ and Lighting Appeal

We are on the cusp of launching the appeal which we hope will excite our congregations and encourage everyone to play their part in helping us achieve our target of £80,000. It may be of interest to note that during our Roof Appeal in 2015 our church members donated over 59% of the total with Gift Aid tax refunds amounting to 11.5% and vat relief through the Listed Places of Worship Scheme being 21.5%. Only 8% came from grants including £10k from the Parish Council. These percentages are based on a total of £156k and ignores the £101.4 k in addition which came from Heritage Lottery Fund.

William Hall 15/09/20