

Parish Church of St Luke - Holmes Chapel (Church Hulme)

Minutes of the Parochial Church Council Zoom meeting

Monday 9th November 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), Yvonne Janvier, Trevor Jenkins, Paula Lavin, Wendy Macdonald, John Oram, Fiona Pullé, Alan Rickards, Barbara Smith, and Steve Smith (Secretary).	
1	Welcome and Opening – Rob welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the newly constituted Church Council which would serve for a shorter period until the next APCM (Sunday 9 th May 2021). He thanked all those who had remained in post for an extra six months because of the need to delay the APCM from May to 25 th October. He extended a particular welcome to those who had been newly elected as a Councillor (Yvonne Janvier) or Deanery Synod Representative (Tim Fryer) and to Paula Lavin who was willing to act as Safeguarding Officer. He then set the context for the meeting by reflecting on the assumption behind Jesus's parables in Matthew 13 i.e. growth occurs where the message of God is spread; followed by prayers.	
2	Apologies for absence – Alison Dale, Ray Davies, and Lee Hardy.	
3	Chairman's report – <i>reprinted as Appendix 1</i>	
4	Minutes of meeting on Monday 21st Sep 2020 – these had been circulated and, following correction of the spelling of "Church Walk" in item 9(d), were adopted <i>nem. con.</i> as a true record of the meeting (as proposed by Alan Rickards and seconded by Peter Cotton); the minutes will be signed by the Chairman in due course.	
5	Matters arising from previous meeting – there were no specific items other than those dealt with during the rest of the meeting.	
6	<p>Appointments following the APCM on 25th Oct 2020</p> <p>Rob thanked Alastair and Jayne for standing again as Churchwardens and also those who had been elected to the Church Council or as Deanery Synod Representatives.</p> <p>a. Appointment of Sidesmen and Church Officers</p> <p>Rob explained that following the introduction of the new 2020 Church Representation Rules, the Church Council was now responsible for appointing sidesmen as well as the usual appointment of Church Council Officers at its first meeting.</p> <p>A list of the proposed appointments, including the names of the men and women willing to stand as sidesmen for a further term until the next APCM on 9th May 2021, had been circulated to Council members before the meeting. He asked if all those listed as proposed to be appointed (particularly as sidesmen) were willing to do so. The Vice-Chairman, Alastair Cragg, confirmed that everyone had indicated their willingness to serve as sidesmen at services once COVID-19 restrictions were relaxed.</p> <p>The Secretary, Steve Smith, confirmed that Wendy Bond had indicated that she was willing to continue as Electoral Roll Officer. He added that he needed to give notice that he would not be standing for reappointment as Secretary after the next APCM. Val Cragg similarly</p>	

	<p>indicated that she would not be standing for reappointment as an Assistant Churchwarden at the next APCM.</p> <p>Rob then thanked all the Council for their continued support and willingness to serve in different roles. He proposed that all the appointments be made as in the circulated list, including that of Paula Lavin as our Safeguarding Officer in succession to Anne Smith. The proposal was adopted <i>nem. con.</i></p> <p><i>Note: a list of appointments made at the meeting is attached to these minutes - Appendix 4</i></p> <p>b. Co-options to Church Council</p> <p>Rob proposed that, as our new Safeguarding Officer, Paula Lavin should be co-opted to the Church Council given the importance of highlighting the shared responsibility of Safeguarding within the parish. She agreed and the proposal was seconded by Fiona Pullé and adopted <i>nem. con.</i></p> <p>Ray Davies has been a long-standing Church Council member and would like to continue to be involved in its work as a co-opted member until the next APCM. His co-option was proposed by Jayne Weaver, seconded by Alan Rickards and adopted <i>nem. con.</i></p> <p><i>Note: A list of Church Council members and their roles is attached to these minutes - Appendix 5</i></p>	
7	<p>Standing Committee, Churchwardens', and Treasurer's Reports</p> <p>These Reports (<i>reprinted as Appendix 2 and 3</i>) had been circulated before the meeting and were taken as read.</p> <p>In answer to a question from John Oram, William Hall indicated that the Diocesan Synod decided any general increase in Parish Share but he expected it would continue to rise by 2.5% again in 2021. There were no other specific questions on the reports.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Alastair, Jayne, and William for their continuing help with managing parish affairs during this difficult period.</p>	
8	<p>Organ & Lighting Projects</p> <p>a. Organ Replacement</p> <p>Steve Smith provided an update. The necessary faculty to remove the organ from the Church of the Good Shepherd in Heswall is awaiting formal grant by the Diocesan Chancellor. Until the faculty document has been issued to Heswall PCC, Cartwrights cannot remove the organ to their workshops in Newcastle-u-Lyme for secure storage. However, all the arrangements are in place for the removal to start as soon as permitted.</p> <p>Our own faculty application to replace our existing organ with the refurbished Heswall instrument is proceeding well. Of the required consultees, only the Church Buildings Council made any comments and these have been satisfactorily addressed by Philip Cartwright. At its October meeting, the DAC recommended our application for approval. It will now go forward to the Registrar for consideration after the end of the required public notice period (4 weeks) during which any interested party may raise a material objection. Assuming no objections are forthcoming, our faculty may be granted during January 2021.</p> <p>b. Organ & Lighting Appeal</p> <p>The Appeal was launched as planned on Harvest Sunday to members of St Luke's before extending it to the wider community. Copies of the new appeal leaflet were hand delivered together with a Harvest letter from Rob and the Churchwardens to those without Zoom access as well as being sent to the 140+ on our email list. The response to date has been</p>	

	<p>encouraging with just over £35,000 donated so far, much of it with Gift Aid which has provided an extra tax grant-back of £5,700. We have also just had it confirmed that the Parish Council is awarding us a grant to the appeal of £5,000. The Appeal sub-committee (chaired by Rob and with Peter Cotton as its secretary) is meeting regularly by Zoom. Approaches are also being made to potential grant awarding bodies.</p> <p>c. Lighting Project</p> <p>Alastair reported that further attempts would be made to arrange a meeting with Lighting Dynamics to get the church internal lighting project relaunched. The current specification needs to be reviewed and finalised with updated pricing so that a new faculty application can be filed. He confirmed in answer to a question from Barbara Smith that provision could be included to provide motion actuated switching of some lighting for visitors.</p>	<i>Alastair and Rob</i>
9	<p>COVID-19 restrictions – Rob briefly introduced a discussion of the impact of the latest restrictions under these headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Opening church for private prayer – this will now need to be restricted to the period until midday after the Wednesday 10.30am and Sunday 9am services to ensure the minimum 2 day “non-use” safety period can be maintained. b) Christmas Services – these are planned to go ahead with the emphasis on the Zoom services already widely advertised through the Churches Together Christmas card unless further restrictions are imposed preventing the restricted Communion services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Detailed arrangements for access to all the Christmas services will be considered by the Standing Committee. c) Church groups - after discussion with Mervyn Harrison, limited bell ringing may now be possible under the new social distancing rules – up to three bells if the Copley family ring as a “bubble”. d) Church Hall – Alastair indicated that the emphasis during the closure is on reconstituting the PCC Church Hall Committee (as mentioned in the Standing Committee Report¹). It is difficult to see how the Hall can yet be reopened for use in view of the stringent cleaning, monitoring and safety measures required under current Government regulations. The possibility of furloughing the Hall cleaner during the prolonged closure will be investigated. 	<i>Standing Committee</i> <i>Alastair</i>
10	Any other business -- no items had been received.	
11	<p>Date of 2021 meetings:</p> <p>PCC: Monday 11th January and Monday 8th March – 7.30pm</p> <p>Annual Church Meetings: Sunday 9th May – time and venue to be decided</p> <p>PCC: Monday 10th May – 7.30pm, venue to be decided</p>	
12	Close of Meeting – there being no further business, Rob closed the meeting with the Lord’s Prayer and the Advent collect at 8.28pm.	

¹ See Appendix 2

Appendices to the minutes of PCC meeting 9 Nov 20

Appendix 1

Chairman's Report

Dear fellow labourers in the Lord's vineyard,

I am soon to mark my first year as vicar of St Luke's and normally, in a new situation, it would be time to change up a gear. At this stage in previous parishes, having got to know people, I would start to help formulate clear priorities and goals. But the emergency response to Covid-19 has slowed a lot of things. I am still trying to get to know people, having been unable to visit homes, or enjoy informal one-to-one conversation. Our goals are presently limited by our circumstances, and it is hard to make plans for December, never mind the next year.

What has become obvious to me, is that in general we have a building job to do. We must ask the Lord to build his people and develop our buildings.

First, Build His People:

St Luke's has some great people, who Jean and I are enjoying getting to know. But our age profile is not healthy. It needs building. Already the Parish Profile had highlighted a lack of youth activity. But it is true more generally that our age profile is significantly skewed towards the senior end of things. As we pray that the Lord builds his people, we do well to include the intention to grow the younger generations who are underrepresented amongst us, as well as to knit everyone, older and younger, into the living body of Jesus Christ which is God's church.

Second, Develop our Buildings:

We are grateful for St Luke's helpful inheritance of buildings in the village, including an iconic church building, a well-placed church hall, a well-appreciated churchyard in Knutsford Road, and a good new vicarage. I have noticed that buildings have dominated my first year, which has been lived mainly on a building site, and which has involved the launch of our organ & lighting appeal. I am aware that my years here may well have a continuing theme of developing our buildings to be more fit for 21st Century purpose, as we approach the 600th Anniversary of the church in 2030.

It is obvious to me, and I hope you see it too, that we are facing a building job: build a people, develop the buildings. The picture which the Apostle Peter gives us, of Jesus being the foundation and the roof, and we the living stones, being built into a spiritual house, should help inspire us together in this task.

Building a people has been frustrated a little by lockdown, but we have grown from one housegroup to four small groups, including a fledgling Youth Group called Exodus. Such small group activity is an excellent way to grow closer as well as grow spiritually. I hope to add more small groups as we Build the Lord's people. In this way the Word of God will have more fertile soil to grow and bear fruit.

I am also exercised by how we can style our services to address our age profile challenge. For the moment, I pray and dream, but if anyone shares the burden of this vision, please let me know.

Your vicar for nearly a year, hoping my honeymoon period is extended,

Rob.

Appendix 2

Standing Committee and Churchwardens' Reports

Standing Committee Report

Since the last PCC meeting in September the standing committee has met twice in October via Zoom. The harvest service was discussed and it was agreed to send a letter, prayer booklet and organ and lighting appeal letter to the members of the congregation who do not join the Zoom services.

A special invitation service to remember loved ones recently deceased was arranged for Sunday 1st November.

The arrangements for Remembrance Sunday were discussed in the light of the recent changes to Covid-19 restrictions. It was agreed church should remain open from 11.15am until 4pm for individual private prayer enabling individuals to safely view the poppies and flowers inside church.

Churchwardens' Report

Church Hall Committee - John Murfin has decided to step back from his role of Chair and Bookings Secretary of the PCC's Church Hall Committee for personal reasons. We would like to thank him for his long and devoted service to the Committee. John will continue as a committee member.

Rob and Alastair held a meeting with the Church Hall Committee to discuss the way forward. Derek and Judy Copley have agreed to share the role of Committee Chair and, in the interim until further volunteers step forward, Mike and Barbara Street have agreed to act as Hall Booking Secretaries. However, in view of the difficulty in maintaining COVID-safe conditions, the Church Hall remains closed for the foreseeable future.

Annual Parish Meetings (Vestry Meeting and APCM) - These were held for the first time via Zoom on Sunday 25th October at 4pm and were well attended by 39 people.

Church magazine - The Church magazine was produced in printed format for November by our new local printers - The Print Room - and has been very well received.

Quinquennial Inspection Report - The draft version of the Quinquennial report received from Bench Architects on 28th July is being discussed by the Vicar, Churchwardens and Secretary so that it can be finalised with a clear indication of what work is essential and over what timeframe.

Grant from the sale of the old Vicarage - The Diocese has confirmed that the parish will be invited to bid for up to 10% of the profit (subject to a maximum of £20k) from the sale of the Vicarage. The money should be spent on a tangible project with a long-term local and missional benefit rather than on day-to-day expenses.

Alastair Cragg and Jayne Weaver: Churchwardens - 3 Nov 20

Appendix 3

Treasurer's Report

General - Since our last meeting in September our income for the last two months has been £15,441 but our expenditure was £20,242, leaving a shortfall of £4,801. At the end of October our surplus had changed into an overall deficit of £420. I expect to end the year with a deficit but the extent of the shortfall depends on whether the church reopens in time for the Advent and Christmas festivities.

Looking forward to 2021 we must assume that our Parish Share will rise again by 2.5% as it has done for at least the last five years. However, it is possible that the Diocese might decide to pause this process to consider the unexpected financial pressures parishes have faced this year.

Remembrance - Due to the lockdown restrictions, there will not be a Remembrance Sunday service and thus no collection from the church will be sent to the Legion as has been our custom in the past. It is hoped that anyone wishing to donate to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal will do so individually this year.

Organ & Lighting - It is just over a month since we launched our Organ and Lighting appeal and the level of donations received from our members has been gratifying. Details of our progress will appear in a separate report.

Support for St Luke's Church, Brinnington - For many years we have made a cash donation to St Luke's Brinnington to help them maintain their parish work. This spring we had intended to join their congregation for afternoon tea in the vicarage garden but Covid restrictions made it impossible. The weekly sales which bring in parishioners and those living in other parts of Stockport have in the past provided financial support for the parish. Unfortunately, these have not taken place since mid-March and the church's finances are much lower than usual. Since July services have been held in the main church hall instead of the small side chapel for social distancing reasons.

From comments made to us by Linda, our contact in Brinnington, the Covid restrictions have affected the lives of their parishioners to a greater extent than for us in Holmes Chapel as many people are locked down in small flats and deprived of the chance to socialise with neighbours and meet family. I have no doubt that the vicar, Lynne Cullens, and her staff have done all they can to keep the church in Brinnington together and we wish them well.

In the circumstances, I propose that we continue our policy of donating £1,250 to their PCC this year.

William Hall – Hon Treasurer - 05/11/20

Appendix 4

Church Hulme Parochial Church Council – Appointments made at meeting on 9th Nov 2020

Chairman	Rob McLaren
Vice-chairman	Alastair Cragg
Secretary	Steve Smith
Treasurer	William Hall
Data Protection Officer	Jayne Weaver
Director of Music	Wendy Macdonald
Electoral Roll Officer	Wendy Bond
Fire Safety Officer	Peter Cotton
Genesis Leader	Fiona Pullé
Health & Safety Officer	Jayne Weaver
Parish Giving Officer	Jayne Weaver
Safeguarding Officer	Paula Lavin
Sidesmen (20)	Darren Cottier Douglas Cragg Kevin Fryer Richard Gabbitas John Jack Glen Jackson Sandra Jackson Trevor Jenkins John Land Alan Lane Anne Lane Jane Massey John Oram Jean Paton Rod Pickles William Pullé Lew Riches Pat Riches Lucy Suchland David Thompson
Co-opted lay members to the Council until the next APCM	Ray Davies Paula Lavin

Appendix 5

Church Hulme Parochial Church Council – 2020-2021 membership (after Annual Meetings on 25th Oct 20 and PCC meeting on 9th Nov 20)

Name and Role	Status	APCM Tenure		
Canon Rob McLaren – Vicar and Chairman	<i>ex officio</i>	---	---	---
Mr Alastair Cragg – Churchwarden & Vice-Chairman	<i>ex officio</i>	2021		[2023]
Ms Rachel Copley	elected	2021		
Mr Peter Cotton – Assistant Churchwarden	elected			2023
Mrs Valerie Cragg – Assistant Churchwarden	elected	2021		
Mrs Alison Dale	elected		2022	
Mr Raymond Davies	co-opted	2021		
Mr Timothy Fryer - Deanery Synod Rep	<i>ex officio</i>			2023
Mr Stephen Haigh - Assistant Churchwarden	elected			2023
Mr William Hall - Treasurer & Deanery Synod Rep.	<i>ex officio</i>			2023
Mrs Yvonne Janvier	elected			2023
Mr Trevor Jenkins	elected		2022	
Mrs Paula Lavin – Safeguarding Officer	<i>co-opted</i>	2021		
Mrs Wendy Macdonald - Director of Music	elected	2021		
Mr John Oram	elected		2022	
Mr Lee Hardy - Deanery Synod Rep.	<i>ex officio</i>	2021		2023
Mrs Fiona Pullé - Genesis Leader	elected			2023
Mr Alan Rickards	elected	2021		
Mrs Barbara Smith - Deanery Synod Rep.	<i>ex officio</i>			2023
Dr Steve Smith - Secretary	elected			2023
Mrs Jayne Weaver – Churchwarden, Parish Giving Officer, Data Protection Officer, & Health and Safety Officer	<i>ex officio</i>	2021		[2024]
Elected: 12; co-opted: 2; ex officio: 7 (Vicar +2 Churchwardens + 4 Deanery Synod reps)				