**St ANDREW’S CHURCH, STAPLEFORD**

# **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

Charity registration number 1158492

**MINUTES OF THE PCC MEETING** – **Monday 25 January 2021**

*Please note that financial statements, notes, diary, sub-committee reports etc, are pre-circulated and filed with the minutes in the official PCC file, with key points recorded. Any discussions or decisions arising from such documents are recorded in the following text.*

**Present**: Simon Taylor, Alastair MacGregor, Nicky West, Anand Pillai, Chris Bow, Clare Coates, Felicity Cooke, Jackie Nettleton, Jacqui Watkins, Lizzie Taylor, Mary Cooper, Romie Ridley, Simon Humphrey, Sue Brown

Before the meeting started, presentations were made to Jon West and Ed Rose to thank them for their hard work on the Messenger.

1. Opening prayer  
The meeting opened with a reading from Psalm 67 and a prayer.

2. Apologies  
Apologieswere received from Lisa MacGregor and Oliver Challis.

3. Minutes of previous meeting  
The minutes of the meeting held 23 November 2020 were approved.

4. Finance  
Chris Bow reported. See accounts on file

a. Management accounts for 2020

Chris presented the management accounts for the year. The draft accounts will require a trustees report and accounts to be independently examined. No substantial change in the numbers from these management accounts is anticipated other than adjustment to market value of investments.

The balance sheet and summary of funds gives the overall picture of the year. The three major funds – General, Johnson Hall and Estate – show a small operating surplus of £145.74. Added to that is the Messenger surplus of £3,737.23 coming back to the church after allocating £3,000 to charitable/community donations. The church has nearly £4,000 surplus. The investment gain line in the accounts presented shows £0. Information is now available so that figure has now been adjusted up £4,879, increasing the PCC’s assets by nearly £5,000.

The cash position of the PCC is satisfactory – there is approximately £10,000 in the current account, £63,000 in the savings account and £12,000 in CCLA deposit account.

The Johnson Hall Fund shows a £8,269.22 surplus after taking into account the one-off £10,000 grant from South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Estate Fund is substantially down on previous years. The donation from the Friends of St Andrew’s and wifi donations are put into the Estate Fund as restricted funds. Repairs costs are increased by about £3,000 over budget due to the cost of tree surgery and repair following the fall of plaster.

For the three charitable funds, the Nachingwea expenditure equates to income, the Children’s Society money has been paid out, and the Warden scheme fund holds about £400. This money relates to last year (from donations and the Christmas Tree Festival). After discussion it was decided to hold this sum temporarily until after the forthcoming meeting with Age UK.

As regards the General Fund, the income has held up well all things considered. Donations benefited from a couple of large gifts earlier in year. Regular giving has been maintained. Fees are down because there have been few fee earning events. Expenditure in 2020 was approximately £5,000 less than 2019 due to reductions in postage and stationery, less cottage maintenance and repairs and lower Youth worker costs. There is a continuing deficit but not as bad as it could have been.

For the Messenger fund there was a surplus of £6,737.23. Printing costs were reduced compared to previous years but advertising was steady. That may not be the case going forwards.

The Verger’s Cottage account shows a loss. There have been some maintenance costs i.e. PAT tests. We are disputing the amount charged by British Gas for electricity which seems excessive.

Chris reported that he is working towards presenting the final 2020 accounts to the March PCC meeting.

b. Budget for 2021

It is not known when we can start re-letting the Johnson Hall. A figure of £5,000 was proposed in the budget; Simon Taylor suggested a cautious budget, more like £2,500 – which would result in a £1,000 loss for the year.

For the Estate fund, Chris Bow made a rough estimate of the amount. For the ceiling repair the Standing Committee has chosen Option 3. Alastair MacGregor suggested Friends of St Andrew’s could help with the costs. The cost of wifi for the church is estimated at about £6,500.

For the General Fund Chris had attempted to track what we did this year. Overall income is broadly the same as 2020. There is likely to be a decline in interest on investments. Administration expenses are about £1,800. Cottage/Johnson Hall cleaning costs increased a lot and this was discussed. There has been no cleaning since November (normally an hour per week in hall and half hour in cottage). The parish share paid to the diocese has seen a further drop. Administrator and youth worker costs are broadly the same as last year. There will be a reduction of about £5,000 as the administrator, youth worker and organist have been furloughed till end of March (approximately). Verger’s Cottage running costs are the same as last year. For the Messenger advertising income is anticipated to be down on 2020, and printing costs about the same.

5. Standing Committee activity since last PCC meeting

Simon Taylor reported. See notes on file.

a. Church closure for services

Simon Taylor has laid out data about infection rates, and communications from the bishops that informed the decision to close the church for services. The PCC was asked for suggestions as to what to do going forward and how to keep the matter under review. Felicity Cooke said we should continue to be extremely cautious. Simon Taylor shared the South Cambridgeshire figures showing the 7-day rolling average of cases per 100,000 of population. Simon Humphrey said he had seen more people out and about than in earlier lockdowns. Lizzie Taylor mentioned the new post-church Zoom coffee morning to include those who have not been able to get out. There was general agreement not to open up yet. Mary Cooper suggested waiting until the end of February when the picture might be clearer. It was suggested the matter should not be reviewed more often than every 6 weeks or so. It was agreed the review would be left in hands of the Standing Committee, who would meet in the last week of February.

b. Ceiling repair

It was reported that the Standing Committee had chosen Option 3 to keep people safe without major works for the time being. The net will prevent anyone being harmed if more plaster fell. Stephen Brown is finding out if a faculty is required.

c. Furlough/lay-off

This was reported to the PCC. There were no requests to discuss further.

6. Verger ’s Cottage  
Alastair MacGregor led the discussion. See notes on file at items 6 and 12(k).

Alastair refreshed people’s memory of the discussion at the last PCC meeting about refurbishing the cottage with a view to letting it. It is not something to be undertaken lightly due to the amount/cost of work required, and loss of workplace for Clare, Gillian and Zoe. However, it is not feasible to go on losing money and we will have to look at other ways to reduce expenditure. Jacqui Watkins said that nothing materially has changed since the last meeting and thought it had been decided not to get into a large debate at this stage. There have in fact been some changes – we did not anticipate a third lockdown, there are variant viruses and the vaccine programme has started. Lizzie Taylor reminded us that we had discussed stewardship and could wait and see if it bears fruit over the coming year. It was decided to keep the subject under review. Alastair asked everyone to think of ways to cut costs and raise funds.

7. Governance

Simon Taylor reported. See notes on file.

a. PCC membership of sub-committees

It has been the practice to make sure that there is a PCC representative on all major church committees.

In the list in the papers Sue Brown should have been listed as a member of the Children’s Society Partnership Committee.

Nicky West volunteered for the Messenger Fund Committee.

Felicity said the new Messenger production team should have its relationship with PCC formalised. This will go on the agenda for the next meeting.

b. Succession planning

Matters in papers on file noted.

8. Diary

Presented as it stands in lockdown. Some communions have been added, planned for Candlemas and Ash Wednesday. Jacqui Watkins suggested that the Pastoral Committee could deliver communion to people who would normally participate in the service; a pack of consecrated bread could be made up in advance. A discussion ensued. It was noted that the bishops have said consecration cannot be given through a screen. Simon Taylor made a note to say something inclusive at the start of the service.

The proposed date for APCM is Monday 10 May 2021.

9. Eucharists

Romie Ridley led the discussion. And see Simon Taylor’s notes on file.

Romie Ridley was spoken to by a number of the church family and had heard that others were also worried/angry about the lack of communions when services had resumed last year. They thought their faith was not being respected, and that the pattern of services was not inclusive. Romie considered that this raised concerns about spiritual nourishment and pastoral care. We have lost some people to Shelford church. It was acknowledged that everything has changed in pandemic and that older people particularly felt isolated.

The developing pattern set out in the papers on file was discussed. Jacqui Watkins said it was good to have clarification of the plan, with it being proposed that there should be communion each week in some shape or form. Looking at Simon Taylor’s proposed plan, it was considered whether communion should be at 10.30 or 9 am on the third Sunday of the month. Jacqui’s proposal was for communion services at 10.30 am inside on week 1, 9 am communion services (all inside) on weeks 2, 3 and 4, and 10.30 am outside on week 3. It was recognised that we are striving to be more inclusive and to offer a broad range of services. Simon saw 9 am as the more traditional spot but the plan to develop it did not really get off the ground before the latest lockdown.

Clare Coates said that with Forest Church communion there have been two communion services at the church in week 1. Simon noted that a whole new group of people have been introduced to communion this way – there have been 30-35 people (families with children) at Forest Church communion services.

Felicity Cooke noted the proposed plan and suggested that for weeks 2 to 4 there should be 9 am BCP Communion on weeks 2 and 4, and Common Worship communions on week 3, which would give a balance (indoors) of two BCP and two Common Worship communions each month. Romie Ridley agreed with the suggestion that Common Worship rather than the BCP should be used on week 3 in this pattern.

Alastair MacGregor said that the pandemic has shown that the church can be more inclusive and welcomed newcomers. Jacqui Watkins suggested communicating to people what we are working towards to avoid people jumping to conclusions.

Mary Cooper said not everyone, particularly elderly, can access Zoom or open attachments to emails, so they are not accessing information. Nicky West asked if Mary has a list of people who do not access information. A newsletter through the door of those people was suggested. Lizzie Taylor said there are others round the village, isolated, who do not come to church but who could be included in the newsletter. Attempts are being made to help people with technology.

10. Safeguarding

Lisa MacGregor filed a report.

SSYI and TeenYoga were using the Johnson Hall up until Christmas. The Diocese requires a list of non-church events taking place in our premises and the PCC noted and approved the inclusion of those activities.

Lisa MacGregor and Simon Taylor have drafted a policy on safeguarding with regard to social media. Simon noted that we are looking at rationalising our many social media outlets and that in fact Clare Coates had bought her work phone using part of the grant she received from the diocese as a new curate. She pays the ongoing costs. The PCC is grateful for that, but it was noted that the church remained willing to pay those costs as expenses should that become necessary in future.

11. Christian Meditation

Jacqui Watkins, Felicity Cooke and Romie Ridley reported. See notes on file.

There were no questions and their proposal was accepted. Jacqui Watkins was willing to learn how to set up and maintain a webpage.

12. Sub-committee and group reports

a. Youth. Report on file.

Simon Taylor reported that it is not only in Stapleford that young people are not engaging with online youth groups now.

b. Children. Report on file

c. YouthInc. Nothing to report

d. Eco Church. Nothing to report

e. Events. Nothing to report

f. Prayer/House groups. Reports on file.

g. MU. Nothing to report

h. Stapleford-Nachingwea Link. Report on file.

On 16 May there will be a celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Nachingwea Link, lunch, and maybe a concert. It will be moved to August if May is not possible.

i. St Andrew’s Children’s Society Partnership. Report on file.

It was noted that the Advent Challenge has gained some fairly wide traction.

j. Fabric. Report on file

k. Johnson Hall & Verger’s Cottage. Report on file

l. Friends of St Andrew’s. Nothing to report

m. Deanery. No report received

n. Pastoral care group. Report on file.

Simon Taylor noted a plan, to be discussed with the pastoral care group, for Romie Ridley, as part of her pastoral assistant training to take up the role of co-ordinating the group with help from Clare Coates.

o. Community Warden Scheme. Report on file.

Jackie Nettleton reported that the numbers of users have dropped generally and we need a warden who can help to replace those numbers. There has been a lack of continuity due to services being provided by relief wardens.

p. Messenger. Report on file.

Felicity Cooke reported that the new team is still in the formation stage; they are grateful to Ed Rose and Jon West for stepping in to help in this transition period.

13. Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting not already dealt with.

14. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

15. Any Other Business

None was discussed. Jackie Nettleton had raised an issue (recruitment of more volunteers) but this was put over to the next meeting.

16. Date of next meeting

Monday 22 March at 19.45 hrs, by Zoom unless notified otherwise

Alastair MacGregor closed the meeting with a prayer.