**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

**St. Peter’s Church, Yateley**

**7.30 p.m. 5th April 2022**

**Present:** There were 59 attendees.

**Apologies:** John Divall, Judy Divall, John Moloney, Sheila Reed, David Reed, David Beardmore, Henryk Urban, Alex Unadkat, Rebekah Cole, Ranjan Emmanuel, Faith Bailey, Peter Ridley, Suzanne Ridley, Desmond Thuambe.

**Welcome and prayer.**

Tim welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The structure of the meeting this year is slightly different. Sue Harkins and Jen Trevena will give a presentation about Discoveries and Café 46, this will be followed by the Annual Parish Meeting and the APCM. Tim feels this to be symbolically important and is about restructuring how to do things.

Tim went on to talk about mindfulness in relationship with God, given that mindful means ”draw to mind” and quoted Psalm 8, “What is man that you are mindful of him?” What is it as people that makes God mindful of us? When Jesus rose, he said one word “Mary” – he was mindful of her, she was in his heart. The infinite God that created all things shows something of the incredible mindfulness He has for you and me. God is mindful of us together - Paul’s letters are to groups of people. We are the body of Christ. Paul says to his readers “Let you be of one mind”. God has us in mind, we should have God in our mind. We are in His hands.

The meeting opened reading Psalm 8, and with prayer.

**Business Review Presented by Sue, Jen and Nick Norton.**

* 2018 and 2019 were normal years with growth in Café 46 sales from £110k to £124k.
* Café 46 faced difficulties in 2019 and 2020 as there was the wrong ratio between paid staff and volunteers.
* In 2020 and 2021 both businesses faced periods of lockdown with little growth in retail with a turn round in profit of £30k from one year to the next in Café 46.
* 2021 showed an improvement over 2020 due partly to Government support.
* Discoveries showed a lot of stability in its cost base and was in profit throughout. Good results.
* Jen took over as Café 46 manager during lockdown.

**Café 46 – presented by Jen**

* Tim’s vision for the Café resulted in a new image with new posters and new opportunities for outreach.
* The Café got bigger and busier, with a change in the position of the till and rearranging the layout to give more seating.
* In July the Café achieved a rating of 5 from Environmental Health.
* Summer saw seating outside, a marquee and toys. A cherry tree was felled in the churchyard and the logs have become seats, stepping-stones etc.
* There have been changes to staff, Malinda has been promoted to Deputy Manager, and there have been other promotions within the workforce. A kitchen assistant, Julie, has been appointed and has made a huge difference. Due to these changes Jen feels she has now been freed to manage.
* Past staff have returned to work in the Café, and there are 22 new volunteers. Jen gave her huge thanks to all the Team.
* There are 4 Duke of Edinburgh’s Award candidates working in the Café. {6 in Discoveries!}
* Once a month the CAB comes to the Café.

**Discoveries presented by Sue.**

* Community vouchers – 35 x £20 have been given out so far. Roo Joyner approached the schools and the vouchers have been allocated on the recommendation of the Head Teachers. It is hoped the scheme can continue.
* The “Thought Boards” outside the shop have been popular.
* We have been sharing information about saving the planet and are mindful of how things that cannot be sold are dealt with. Most is sent away to a variety of organisations for recycling. There is a thriving up-cycling group which produces new goods from items that cannot be sold {Sue and Jen showed examples}. Since September £1400 has been raised from the sale of up-cycled goods.
* Sue stressed the importance of young people to the running of Discoveries, mainly on Saturdays. Carol Charter left, but still helps out, Lena left to go travelling. Anyone wanting a paid job must first have been a volunteer; Marcus volunteered and is now Assistant manager, Bjanka also volunteered and is now a paid member of staff. Sue expressed her thanks to all staff and volunteers.
* A successful plant swap event took place, and another is planned.

Jen and Sue get on well and see the Café and Discoveries as a joint establishment raising funds for the church. The outside space is a big plus, and they want to expand its use as a community space.

Sue and Jen expressed their sincere thanks to Mark Vernon for all his support and always being there for them throughout the difficulties.

Tim said there are two fantastic managers who consistently go above and beyond their remit, and two fantastic businesses. He also expressed his appreciation of the financial support from the Government which kept the businesses viable.

**Annual Parish Meeting.**

This is a separate meeting at which the Churchwardens are elected.

**Minutes of the last meeting**. There being no errors or omissions the minutes were signed as a true record.

Proposed: Alan Kinaird. Seconded: Nicki Duncalfe. All in favour.

**Election of Wardens.**

There were two nominations for the position of Churchwarden, Linda Hoskins, nominated by Maureen King, seconded by Jen Trevena, and Ian Hutchinson, nominated by Maureen King, seconded by Jen Trevena. There being no other nominations, Linda and Ian were duly appointed. Tim thanked Linda and Ian saying they were brilliant friends and likening them to Aaron and Hur holding up Moses’ arms when he tired.

The meeting closed with prayer for Linda and Ian

**APCM**

**Present/Apologies.** See above.

**Minutes of the last meeting.** There was one noted error, already identified and corrected. The last bullet point at the bottom of page 2 should read “2020 saw a further fall to £199k”. The minutes were then accepted and signed as a true record.

Proposed: Sue Harkins. Seconded: Katie Urban. All in favour.

**Matters Arising/AOB –** none.

**Electoral Roll.** The Electoral Roll stands at 244 members, an increase on last year {241}.

**PCC Elections.**

Members whose term has come to an end were Desmond Thuambe, Nick Norton, Trevor Aylen, and Wendy Thompson.

Nicky Thuambe and Katie Urban stood down. Ian Hutchinson is a Churchwarden so did not need to be elected to PCC. This gave 7 vacancies. Tim thanked all those stepping down for their service.

The Churchwardens, Clergy, and Deanery Synod members also attend PCC meetings. Mark Vernon, Maureen King, Roo Joyner, and Gill Weeks can attend as appropriate.

Nominees were Stuart Bailey

 Jess Unadkat

 Amy Lyburn

 Lynn O’Mahoney

 Margaret Keane

 Nick Norton

 Michael Duncalfe.

There being 7 vacancies and 7 nominees, the above were duly appointed.

Trevor Aylen wished to serve a second term and was appointed without submitting a form. To enable this, it was suggested that there being a vacancy for a Deanery Synod rep, either Trevor or Stuart should fill this post. Although he was not nominated for this role Stuart agreed to do so, enabling him to be on PCC.

Amy Lyburn submitted her Electoral Roll form with her PCC nomination form. As nominees should normally have been on the Electoral Roll for 6 months Amy was co-opted onto PCC until the 6 months has passed. She has been a regular and active member of St. Peter’s since the summer.

Nick Norton had served 6 years on PCC, but as he has agreed to continue as Treasurer until a successor can be found he was appointed for a further year.

The terms of service stand as follows:

3 years – Trevor Aylen, Michael Duncalfe, Margaret Keane, Amy Lyburn.

2 years – Lynn O’Mahoney.

1 year – Nick Norton, Jess Unadkat.

All in favour.

**Annual Report and Accounts presented by Nick Norton.**

The businesses having been dealt with, this presentation is almost exclusively about the church, the 2021 results, then going forward.

* The bottom line shows an overall deficit of £10k, impacted by the pandemic.
* 2020 showed a deficit of £34k, so an overall improvement in 2021.
* The businesses saw an improvement of £42k, the church got worse by £23k partly due to a drop in income.
* There is a difference in the accounting, mostly in the SoFA and due to depreciation of assets. Nick is willing to discuss this if required.
* The church income is down by £10k on the previous year, but the previous year included income from Cornerstone. The Cornerstone income does not feature in 2021 so the underlying Church income is about the same as last year.
* 90% of income is from church members, and Nick expressed his gratitude for this.
* Expenditure stands at £242k, up by £13k compared with the figure for last year. If the figures for Cornerstone are taken out, and the figures looked at like for like, the increase is £26k. £14k is due to the appointment of the Family and Schools Pastor in 2021.
* Fabric expenses are up £17k which includes substantial work on the drains amounting to £21k.
* The Parish Share was down from £111k to £104k. The Diocese put into place mitigating actions for Covid, cut their own costs and passed it on to the parishes.
* Appeal to refurbish the church – the final outcome including Gift Aid, raised £42k, enough to refurbish Oasis as well. Nick thanked all who had contributed to this.

How St. Peter’s helps others as well.

* Mission giving. A percentage of church income is given each year. £16k was given in 2021 to a variety of beneficiaries, and £20k is budgeted for this year. £12.5k has already been paid out. This year sees a different method of calculation. Funding has been given to Vision4Youth to fund a night worker, from the

 church education fund in 2021.

* Covid Hardship Fund. £8.8k has been donated in total, and £7.1k distributed. The church has strong links with the schools and recipients have been identified by the schools as being struggling families.

Nick’s concern about the cash held.

* In 2021 the cash held reduced from £199k to £131k, a substantial decline. There is a £10k deficit, the repayment of the loan from Winchester, standing at £38k, capital spend on fixed assets of £18k during the year, mainly down to the new oven.
* There was £150k of cash earning interest at the start of the year, this is now down to £75K. We are seeing an interest increase on the accounts now, one of the banks is passing it on.
* Looking at the future position, apart from day to day expenditure, there are other things that need to be done.
* The Diocesan loan has 4.5 years to run, so is over half-way.
* Essential maintenance. Money is ring-fenced for two projects, the Lych Gate and the Mansafe system.
* There are two areas that Nick is struggling with, that we would like to do, but have no available funds, the first of these being further redevelopment of the church, in particular improving the toilet facilities. A team is looking at this, but there are currently no firm plans, or ways of financing it.
* The second area is that £30k a year for three years had been set aside for a Youth and Community Worker, but this has been superseded by the Schools and Families Pastors, which have been a great success. There is limited funding for youth work, more may be allocated.
* The spend in 2022 will be higher because the Parish Share will rise from £104k to £119k, a return to paying the normal amount. Also, the Schools and Families Pastor work will be a full year’s costs, £13k more than last year.
* To fund this we are targeting a significant increase in giving, from £162k in 2021 to £189k. The church is still considerably reliant on the businesses to support church costs.
* Nick showed a slide illustrating the Giving gap, tracking back to 2017. Looking at church expenditure like for like and removing the cost of the Youth and Community worker in 2019, removing the cost of the drains and looking at the normal costs, expenditure is increasing year on year. It is significant that giving in 2021 was less than in 2017. Although giving is being targeted the gap v expenditure is widening. If the church is looked upon as a free-standing operation, rather than relying on the businesses, the deficit is getting worse year by year. There are not many areas where costs can be cut.
* There is concern about the finances, the church is in this position partly because of the pandemic, with an estimated permanent impact of £100k. Government support of £100k plus other grants has been received, if this had not been received almost all the cash would have been used up. If it can be left at £100k the situation would be difficult but not impossible.
* The church has assets of £1.1 million pounds, mainly in the land and buildings. These are fixed assets and cannot be converted to cash.
* There has been a drain on the cash from CapEx, though the loan expenditure is always paid using income from the businesses and from fund-raising.
* There are specific projects which are in the pipeline – the Lych Gate, and the Mansafe system.
* St. Peter’s is looking at an overall break-even budget, but there are difficulties in achieving this:
1. Costs are rising across the board.
2. At present the church is not getting sufficient regular giving. On the appeal day £7,300 including Gift Aid was raised in one-off donations from just 20 people. Nick expressed his gratitude for their generosity.
3. Nick is looking at drawing £48k across from the businesses, but this is their total profit and Discoveries is well behind in the first quarter. The situation is being addressed but it is not yet there.
* Nick said that if we are to achieve the budget the cash reserves will be reduced by £32k, the trend line is looking down, and there is a need to look closely and hard at the future finances of St. Peter’s.

Nick thanked all those that help with the finances, particularly Maureen, and stated his confidence that she will be there to help the next Treasurer.

**Q.** What is the implication of reserves being less than £100K? **A.** The policy requires reserves to cover three months expenditure, anything less than this would be a breach of the policy. It may be necessary to look at the policy and come up with something more sophisticated.

**Q.** Have the increases in the cost of energy been factored into the budget? **A.** Increases have been factored into the budget, but it was not possible to get up-to-date figures from Parish Buying. 20% has been put in for gas but this may not be enough, and the budget will be stretched.

There being no other questions, Tim gave “massive” thanks to Nick for all his work.

Approval of the Annual Report and Accounts.

Proposed: Sarah Quarterman. Seconded: Steve King. All in favour.

Appointment of Chamberlains as independent auditors.

Proposed: Nick Norton. Seconded: Katie Urban. All in favour.

**Tim’s address.**

In the Spring of 2021, we had a sermon series entitled “From Lockdown to the Promised Land” We looked at what it meant to be in lockdown and what it meant to leave the past behind. We looked at God’s provision on the journey, we looked at the rumours about the land ahead and finally we got to the point of occupying the land.

Go back to the previous summer and in my first service here we looked at the verses from Isaiah 43, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?”

Isaiah 43:18-19

The context was that the people were in lockdown, this time in Babylon. and God, as he had done in Egypt, had promised them a way out. But God was saying: right, now is the time

to move on from the past, to recognise the glories of what he did then and rejoice in them, but to move on into the things, into the places, into the new land he has for us.

I noted Five things in this verse:

*Now it springs up;*

*do you not perceive it?”*

Isaiah 43:19

Firstly: **“See”.**

Look – Pay attention! If you are concentrating on going back to the past, you will not see it! Concentrate! Focus on what God is doing!

Secondly: **“I am”**

When Moses is staring at the Burning Bush he asks God who he is and God says “I am who I am”, don’t try and box me let me be me!

When the Bible uses the “I am” phrase it is pointing us to the reality of the God who is simply who he is.

God says look, see! It’s me. Nobody else. Like I did it hundreds of years ago I will do it again and save you. And I will do it again and again because I love you.

Firstly: **“See”**

Secondly: **“I am”**

Thirdly: **“I am Doing”**

Our God is a dynamic God: he is always on the move. I’m not a Hebrew expert but some translations say that God “will do” a new thing, but in the eternal God that we know and love and worship, he is always on the move, now and every day.

Firstly: **“See”**

Secondly**: “I am”**

Thirdly: “**I am Doing”**

Fourthly: **“New”**

Go back to Genesis 1 and we are told that the Spirit “brooded” over creation.

He Hovered. He desperately wanted to do something. When God does something “new”

he does it focussed, dedicated and dynamic. But let’s just be clear about one thing: When the Bible talks about “new” it has a sense of regeneration about it.

When Revelation 21talks about a new heaven and a new earth, it is not about rolling up the current version and getting rid of it. When 2 Corinthians 5:7 talks about us being a new creation, it doesn’t mean that our past ceases to exist. When Jesus’ is resurrected, he still has the scars of his former body. The past is what has shaped us for good, for bad.

But God says – lets do something new: let’s transform, let’s regenerate. God says to them: remember the past learn from it but: *Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.*

Firstly: **“See”**

Secondly**: “I am”**

Thirdly: **“I am Doing”**

Fourthly: **“a New”**

Finally: **“Thing”**

God is doing something, but I don’t know what it is and none of us do. Verse 19 continues: See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. Nearly two years later I think that is what God is doing: something new.

A couple of weeks ago I was at the Harrogate New Wine Conference and one of the speakers offered a prophetic word that simply said God is wanting move on from the franchise model: that Churches like us simply try to do what other big churches do. That we model ourselves on them. I feel God is saying to us yes, see what they do well and learn from it and apply as appropriate. Don’t be a clone. Don’t be a franchise. Be St Peter’s.

And as enter this new land and we see what God is doing new, we see that he is doing it in St Peter’s in His way, for His glory, and in a manner that is unique to St Peter’s. That is why

he has given us a unique Vision:

That if we are *Rooted, Seeking and Reaching:*

* *Rooted in Word and Spirit*
* *Seeking God in Prayer and Worship*
* *Reaching out in the Presence and Love of Jesus*

Then something new and unique will bring glory to him. It’s new, though. I don’t know what this thing is, but I believe we are beginning to see it. And, my friends, it has meant the word that strikes horror into the heart of every churchgoer. **Change**.

We have seen so much change over the past year. The change to the services is probably the change that most people will recognise.

Change which is always happening but rarely in the way and at the rate we have seen in 2021.

Why?

Bringing Church End and the Centre together.

Living with the effects of lockdown.

Seeking to worship in a completely new era.

Lots of reasons.

Another change has been a long review which Richard Quarterman has brilliantly overseen

involving the restructuring of the relationship between the Church and our businesses. Go back just 5 years and the structure was based around a relatively small shop and a café in Oasis with a business committee keeping an eye on a comparatively little bitof Church enterprise. Under Sue and, more recently Jen, despite the ravages of Covid, these two businesses are completely and utterly different entities. To be honest they overshadow the Church.

My view to the PCC has been that they have begun to dominate and St Peter’s was fast becoming a couple of businesses with a Church rather than a Church with a couple of businesses. So a month or two ago,the PCC took a decision to restructure

and put a small line between the Church and the businesses.

So what does this mean in practice.

* They have the same Vision.
* The businesses are still part of St Peter’s.
* The profits of the businesses will still go to the PCC
* to be used for Mission.
* The Managers will have more autonomy.
* The PCC will now focus on the Church

taking reports from the businesses quarterly.

St Peter’s needs to be St Peter’s

to focus on the Mission

to fulfil the Vision God has given us.

That is why this meeting was restructured in a different way.

That is why the PCC will do things differently.

So that we can focus on what we are to be doing as a Church, as St Peter’s.

There is a clear Biblical precedent for this in Acts 6 if you want to have that!

It’s about freeing the ministry of the Church from the institutional and structural issues.

And incidentally, once they had done it Acts 6: 7 says this:

And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

So we have changed in our worship. We are changing in our structures and I believe God is changing us and growing a new thing in St Peter’s.

I know this is about 2021 but I can’t ignore the past 3 months.

* Roo and Gill and others are building a brilliant work in the schools.
* Our in-Church children’s work is booming.
* We’ve re-started youth work
* Alpha is seeing new Christians.
* Lots of new faces on Sundays.
* We look forward to our new Curates Sam and Ranjan joining us in July
* And recently we have seen the Spirit clearly moving in the 10.30 services.

God is doing something. And this simply asks all of us the question “Do you want to be part of this? Do you want to come into this new land and experience the milk and honey and experience the excitement of what God is doing. My desire is that we go together.

Which is why we have the plans for the Weekend in May. A chance for us to come together,

to worship, learn and play together as the people of God in the new land where God is doing a new thing and we can see it happening all around us.

Tim thanked everyone for attending the meeting and all those who made it possible. He said looking around at all the people who make things happen it shows we are a community that makes things happen.

The meeting ended with prayer.