

## **Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

Held on Sunday 23 May 2021 at 11.15 am.

All Saints' Church, Croxley Green

## **Parishioners' Meeting**

The meeting was conducted in compliance with the Coronavirus restrictions for meetings in places of worship and multi-use facilities

Revd Miriam welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with a prayer at 11 15am.

### **Attendees**

Revd Canon Miriam Mugan (Vicar), Revd Anne Shaw and 22 parishioners attended, including Lyndon Palmer (Churchwarden), Jane Bates, Sam Beard, Fran Bennett, Nik Bennett, Sr Mary Bittles, Rae Bowyer, Alick Burge, Shirley Ford, Pat Foster, John Galloway, Sam Jones, Val Kendle, Susan McKeague, Gillian Main, Janet Martin, Sheila Newman, Ann Palmer, Lyndon Palmer, Francesca Sams, Wendy Shafe and Chris Fagan (Secretary).

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Gretel and Ron Hibbert, Andrew Nobbs, Anne and Chris Oke .

### **Items Raised by Parishioners**

No items were raised.

### **Election of Churchwardens**

Two nominations were received:

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Lyndon Palmer	Alick Burge	Ann Palmer
Anne Oke	Jane Bates	Alick Burge

As there were no other nominations Miriam declared that Lyndon Palmer and Anne Oke had been elected to serve for 2021/22. The meeting signified its assent to the election. She congratulated Anne and Lyndon on their election and thanked them for their service as Churchwardens since the previous Annual Meetings in September 2020.

There being no questions or other business, Miriam declared the meeting ended.

The Parishioners' meeting closed at 11.20 am

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Vicar

## **Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)**

The meeting opened at 11.20am. and was conducted in compliance with the Coronavirus restrictions for meetings in places of worship and multi-use facilities

The meeting received the minutes of the 2020 APCM, the Annual Report and Accounts for 2020, the report on the Accounts by the Independent Examiner and a leaflet summarizing the activities run during the year written by Nik Bennett, with photographs selected by Lyndon Palmer. These documents had been published electronically in advance of the meeting, with paper copies made available for those without access to a computer.

Miriam observed that reports of the principal officers, committees and the organizers of parish activity groups were contained in the Annual Report and reports made would therefore be summaries of key points. Questions on the reports would be invited from those present.

She asked everyone to keep their remarks and any questions brief so that the meeting would not be unduly protracted.

### **Minutes of the Previous APCM held on 27 September 2020**

Copies of the minutes had been distributed in advance of the meeting. Miriam asked whether the minutes could be agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

It was proposed by Fran Bennett and seconded by Janet Martin that the minutes be accepted as a true record and upon a vote being taken the motion was declared carried *nem con*. The minutes were duly signed by Miriam as Chair.

### **Elections to the Parochial Church Council**

The meeting was advised that nominations were required for three lay members to serve for three years. Three nominations had been received, proposed and seconded as follows:

<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Seconder</b>
Jane Bates	Fran Bennett	Shirley Ford
Samantha Jones	Janet Martin	John Galloway
Andrew Nobbs	Christopher Fagan	Ann Palmer

There being no other nominations, Miriam declared that Jane Bates, Sam Jones and Andrew Nobbs had been elected to serve until 2024.

### **Appointment of Independent Examiner**

The Treasurer reported that Mrs Dorothea Reynolds had expressed in advance of the meeting her willingness if re-appointed to continue to serve as the Independent Examiner.

A motion to re-appoint Dorothea Marianne Anna Reynolds as the Independent Examiner of the PCC's accounts was proposed by Nik Bennett and seconded by Ann Palmer and when voted on was agreed *nem con*. Miriam expressed her appreciation of the PCC to Mrs Reynolds for her unpaid work as Independent Examiner over many years.

### **Electoral Roll Officer's Report**

Chris Fagan reported that following the 2021 revision the Electoral Roll had 84 names, a reduction of one from the 2020 total. Four people had died and their names had been removed: Michael Bovington, Roger Cattermoul, Margaret Hobbs and Brenda Mayes. Each of them was greatly missed. Three new names had been added: Abbie Guest, Zoé Martin and Katherine Vandy, all of whom were over 16 years old and were contributing greatly to worship and parish life. Of the names on the Roll, 49 were residents of All Saints' Parish, while 35 were non-resident.

Miriam thanked Chris for his work as Electoral Roll Officer.

### **Annual Report 2020**

Miriam introduced the Annual Report, which provided a full and informative record of the Parish's work, with some excellent photographs, supplemented by the Summary leaflet, which highlighted the work and activities undertaken during a momentous year. She thanked Nik Bennett and Lyndon Palmer for producing the Report and the Summary. Both documents had been published on the parish website in advance of the meeting. Printed copies were available at the meeting and could also be obtained from Chris Fagan. Miriam thanked everyone who had contributed an article for the Annual Report and Lyndon Palmer who had added the illustrative photographs.

### **Secretary's Report**

Chris Fagan reported that the PCC consisted of 14 people, namely the Vicar and the two Churchwardens, two elected Deanery Synod members and nine elected lay members. The elected members each served for three years. It took all major decisions, including setting the annual budget and all other committees reported to it. It met every two months but could hold additional meetings if required. The leading committees were the Finance and Standing, Buildings, Hall, Pastoral and Evangelism (worship and spiritual matters) and Social and Fundraising Committees. There were other very useful working groups with responsibility for family services, the Monday Toddlers group, communications, church flowers, the parish magazine, the Choir, the Youth Group, the Garden Team and recently the group working on preparations for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations for all Saints' Parish in 2022. Details of their work were set out in the Annual Report.

Key decisions taken during 2020 related to broadcasting services online during lockdowns and within Government Covid restrictions, conducting meetings by Zoom, continuing the re-ordering and refurbishment of the church and the hall, reviewing our Safeguarding policy for children and vulnerable adults, approving contracts of employment for our part-time paid staff and taking the difficult decision to reduce our budget for payment of the Parish Share to the Diocese during 2021, due to severe reductions in our income due to Covid restrictions. These had commenced in 2020 and were still continuing during the first half of 2021. A significant event during 2020 was the installation of three impressive gates in the church garden.

Miriam thanked Chris for his report and his work as PCC Secretary.

There were no questions on the report.

## **Safeguarding Report**

In Anne Oke's absence her report was read to the meeting by Miriam.

As with all churches across the country All Saints' PCC took on the responsibility of doing everything in its power to make this a safe place for worship and all church activities. All members of the PCC and all leaders of our activities were vetted by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) on a 5 yearly basis, and keep their safeguarding training and, therefore, their awareness of safeguarding matters, updated every 3 years. This meant that in 2020, some members had to undertake their training via 'Zoom' or online. Anne had updated her training as Parish Safety Officer and also completed Recruitment Training in 2020.

Safeguarding was an area of constant focus in the Church of England and new checks were regularly introduced. To assist with this, St. Alban's Diocesan Safeguarding Officer strongly advised all churches to connect to the Church of England 'Parish Safeguarding Dashboard' which operates across the country to support local parishes, and All Saints' signed up to this in 2020. Using their Safeguarding 'Roadmap' (Boris wasn't the first to use the term 'Roadmap'!), we were guided through the actions, policies and procedures required by the Church of England to make this place as safe as we can. For example, in November 2020, the PCC agreed and adopted procedures for the Reporting of any Serious Incident that *might*, we pray *not*, happen in this Parish - whether a Safeguarding incident or not. This was logged onto the dashboard. She advised that people should be reassured that All Saints' did not regard these requirements as a paperwork exercise: they were in place to ensure that we responded appropriately and effectively to any incident of concern.

At the end of 2020, Anne was able to report that we had completed Level 1 of the Safeguarding Dashboard Roadmap - Safer Foundations - and we were now working at the Level 2 stage.

On the national platform, work was currently being done by the Church of England's Safeguarding Team in response to the report and recommendations of the *Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse* which was completed in October 2020. In due course, these and recommendations from other recent reviews and case studies will also be received by all parishes. We would, therefore, be seeing further changes in this coming year and beyond.

*As always, if you have any safeguarding anxiety or concern, please let me or the Vicar know.*

*Contact with the Safeguarding Team can be made in person, by telephone or via this secure email address - [safeguarding@croxleygreenallsaints.org](mailto:safeguarding@croxleygreenallsaints.org).*

Miriam observed that the Church of England would shortly be publishing to all parishes the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry into child sex abuse and other information. Many parishes had strengthened the size of their safeguarding teams and she would be proposing to the PCC that the All Saints' Safeguarding Team should be increased by a further member. She thanked the Safeguarding Team, Anne Oke, Safeguarding Officer and Shirley Ford, Assistant Safeguarding Officer, for their work during the year.

There were no questions on the report.

## **Deanery Synod Report**

Fran Bennett reported that All Saints' was one of nine parishes within the Rickmansworth Deanery. The Deanery synod usually met quarterly regularly and organized a Deanery Service and social events including a deanery quiz. Miriam, Shirley Ford and herself attended Synod meetings as All Saints' representatives, which enabled useful sharing of ideas and experiences among the member parishes. A new Dean, Rev Simon Cutmore of St Peter's, Mill End parish had been appointed, with a new Deanery Secretary. Due to Covid restrictions only one meeting had taken place, via Zoom, in 2021 which had featured a talk by Rev Tim Bull, Director of Vocations for St Albans Diocese, on the subject of training for ordination. Within the Diocese 50 candidates were currently in training for the ordained ministry and nationally there were 500, while in 2020 18 new priests were ordained at St Albans Cathedral.

There were no questions on the report.

Miriam thanked Anne, Fran and Nik for the report and for representing All Saints' on the Deanery Synod for the previous three years.

## **Treasurer's Report**

In the absence of Andrew Nobbs his written report was read by Chris Fagan.

The Annual Accounts for 2020 were presented, together with the report of the Independent Examiner on the Accounts. Her report was unqualified.

The impact of COVID and the various lockdowns had a major impact on our Church finances in 2020. Total income for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 received in the general fund, was £93,000 whilst expenditure was £106,000. At the end of a turbulent year our losses on the general fund amounted to £13,275. This loss was only sustainable because of the reserves held by the church.

The areas hardest hit were hall booking income (down £14,000) and fundraising. The Christmas Market and prize draw had, in recent years, brought in £6,000 and of course had to be cancelled in 2020.

## **Thanks to the Congregation**

What did hold up well in 2020 was our planned giving, through the Parish Giving Scheme, standing orders and pledged giving envelopes. Many went out of their way to ensure that their envelopes continued to reach us despite the lockdown restrictions.

One-off donations were also well ahead of budget with an additional £6,000 received. He offered profound thanks to everyone who had continued to support the church financially during a very difficult period.

## **Costs**

As the PCC ran a tight ship there was little scope to cut the running costs, although the closure of the church did save £3,500 on heating and lighting. The departure of our organist saved £3,700 as we did not need to employ a locum musician during periods of lockdown.

## **Exceptional Expenditure**

There were two items of exceptional expenditure in 2020; the repointing of the south wall (that had been committed to prior to the first lockdown) and the gates for the church garden. The gates were funded by very generous donations.

Following the imposition of the first lockdown the PCC took the decision that expenditure on special projects should only occur where funding was in place to cover it.

### **Restricted and Designated Funds**

The church held a number of designated and restricted funds where money had either been given for a specific purpose, or money had been set aside by the church for a particular project. These were shown on the balance sheet in the accounts.

In 2020 a most generous bequest of £15,000 was received by All Saints' in memory of the late Margaret Lumsden. The decision was taken to use a large part of this to cover the costs for the new balustrade (freeing up part of the David Williams legacy for other purposes).

New purple frontals were purchased in memory of the late David Williams and in appreciation of his service to All Saints' and in gratitude for his legacy that funded so much of the recent church refurbishment.

A purple chasuble was acquired using the legacy previously received from the late Daphne Sharp.

Towards the end of 2020 a deposit was paid towards the cost of replacement windows for the hall. This was paid from the Hall Restoration Fund into which money had been set aside by the PCC in recent years.

### **Outlook for 2021**

With so many uncertainties the task of setting a budget for 2021 was not easy. To reach our budget targets for 2021 would require hall bookings to reach near normal levels of occupancy from September and also for us to be able to hold fundraising events.

Having drawn on our reserves by £13,000 in 2020 the PCC felt that it was unsustainable for us to draw on them again in 2021 and in order to set a balanced budget it took the difficult decision to reduce our Parish Share contributions in 2021.

We continued to hold £26,000 in our reserves to meet our reserves policy of holding three months cashflow and to protect our finances from the ongoing uncertainties of the COVID situation.

Thanks and appreciation were due to Dot Reynolds for her continued work as Independent Examiner of our accounts.

Miriam expressed her thanks and appreciation for the high-quality service given by Andrew as the PCC's Treasurer.

### **Churchwardens' Report**

Lyndon Palmer expressed thanks to the parishioners for the re-election of Anne Oke and himself as Churchwardens.

He reported that in 2020 due to COVID-19 they had had at times to close the church and also look at new ways to carry on worship under government regulations.

Regarding the church fabric no major work had been carried out in 2020 but routine maintenance had continued to be carried out inside and outside of the church. The Buildings Committee had been examining the possibilities of installing a wheelchair ramp and extending the balustrade at the back of the church between the North and South naves. These works would hopefully be completed in 2021.

They had added to the church Inventory a new high altar frontal, falls for the pulpit, lectern, legillum and the small altar; also a celebrants chasuble and stole. These had all been produced to commemorate the late David Williams.

A big thank-you was offered to all who helped to keep All Saints' Church in such good condition, both inside and outside, especially in 2020 and in 2021, with its virus lockdowns and church closures. There were so many different jobs such as church cleaning, flower arranging, gardening and every kind of maintenance. These tasks were undertaken by a small group of dedicated volunteers.

Special thanks were due to the Assistant Churchwardens Ann Palmer and Nik Bennett for their help through 2020, extending into 2021.

On behalf of everyone at All Saints' the Churchwardens wished to record their thanks to the excellent and very dedicated Pastoral Team at All Saints' – Miriam and Anne.

There were no questions on the report.

Miriam thanked Anne, Lyndon, and the Assistant Churchwardens for their commitment to All Saints' and their firm support to her, which she greatly valued and appreciated.

### **Vicar's Report**

Miriam remarked in how appropriate it was that the Annual Meetings were taking place this year on Pentecost Sunday. We would be seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance on ways in which we could take forward our mission in 2021 and beyond. 2020 had presented major challenges but had seen incredible progress in many areas.

Services and morning prayer had been broadcast online to people at home, the Lent prayer course and a number of meetings had taken place by Zoom, supplemented by What's App for the prayer courses. She thanked Lyndon Palmer for his technical and coaching abilities which had enabled online broadcasting of services to be achieved.

Ann Palmer had developed great expertise in risk assessment which had assisted the handling of hall bookings. It was hoped that adult bookings would resume in June 2021.

Online Family Services had been developed by Anne Oke, Fran Bennett and Jane Bates; they now included cartoons!

Existing work had continued to be undertaken. Alick Burge regularly cut the grass and wound the church clock; Janet Martin, Andrew Nobbs and Margaret Paddick maintained the garden; Wendy Shafe and her team of Fran Bennett, Shelagh Booth and Janet Martin produced the excellent parish magazine, which both entertained, informed and kept many self-isolating or



housebound people in touch with All Saints'. She gave warm thanks to all of them for their selfless work. She was also pleased that the Choir had recently resumed, enabling worship to be accompanied by live singing. Since Spring 2020 Sarah Guest had filled the vacancy for a Choir Director, with Grace at the piano and David Heath and other guest organists providing accompaniment. She thanked Sarah, all the Choir and other musicians warmly for their contribution.

In spite of difficulties caused by Covid-19, the Social and Fundraising Committee was developing a programme of events for 2021, including a virtual Pilgrimage, the Hall and Buildings Committees were pursuing proposals to refurbish the hall, while the Pastoral and Evangelism Committee was reviewing aspects of our worship and considering ideas for a new Mission Action Plan. She thanked all those who were participating in these activities, all of which were forward-focussed. The congregation had been and would remain key members of the All Saints' community.

Miriam gave particular thanks to Rev Anne Shaw and to Ron Hibbert for their great contributions through the year to our services and through their preaching. They had given her invaluable support, for which she was most grateful.

### **What's Next?**

Miriam said that there could be no going back to our old ways. The Church of England was committed to change, exemplified by the production of new wording for services. But where was God wanting us to go?

We needed to grow, in numbers and spiritually. The Parish Day on Saturday morning, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, would be an opportunity to explore ways of growing our church. She invited everyone to come and share their ideas and their experiences.

Sister Mary, speaking on behalf of all those people affected by lockdown and unable to attend services expressed thanks to Miriam for her weekly letters hand delivered to their homes. These letters had kept them informed about everything going on at All Saints' and recipients looked forward every Friday to receiving the letters. She asked how many people were still in self-isolation.

Miriam thanked Sister Mary for her important contribution. She said there were a small number who had not yet come back to church, but they were in contact with All Saints'.

### **Vote of Thanks to Revd. Miriam**

Ann Palmer proposed a vote of thanks to Miriam for her inspirational leadership and active concern for everyone at All Saints' during 2020 and 2021. The vote was declared carried by acclamation, followed by warm applause.

In response, Miriam thanked the meeting for the love and support given to her throughout the past year.

There being no other business Miriam declared the meeting closed at 11.40am.

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Vicar