

Minutes of Meeting 03/2020 of the PCC held on Tuesday 27th October 7.30pm by Zoom

Present

Bob Abel (BA) (Treasurer); Mark Burton (MB) (Churchwarden), Felicity Chapman (FC), Richard Cunningham (RC) (Asst Churchwarden), Susie Downer (SD), Wendy Howell (WH), David Howell (DH) (Churchwarden), Roger Moore (RM) (Secretary),

Welcome and Prayers

David Howell opened the meeting with a reading from Psalm 20 and prayers.

Apologies for Absence

None

Approval of Minutes 02/2020

The minutes were approved unanimously.

Actions and Matters Arising

RM reported that there were no outstanding actions.

Agenda Item 5 - Finance

Bob Abel outlined the situation with regard to legacies in general and the specific legacy from David Page's estate. BA explained the Church of England guidance on legacies and their use and the advice that churches should have a clear legacy policy to inform potential benefactors. David Page's executors had not given any direction for the use of the legacy. Members expressed concern that the funds should not be used solely to meet Parish Share, others were of the opinion that given the current financial situation options should be left open. SD expressed concern at the plight of the poor and needy in the community and wondered whether the Church of England should not be considering selling some of its valuable 'silverware'. MB described how some churches, who have had rich benefactors in the past, have investment income to provide support; he also explained the historic role of glebe land. Following this discussion the PCC resolved unanimously:

- To introduce a Legacy Policy on the lines of the note circulated by BA. **Action RM** to modify and circulate to PCC members for approval.
- To place a £15,000 legacy received from the estate of David Page, a long-standing member of St Barnabas Church, into a designated fund to be used for work on the Church's buildings which fell outside the definition of normal or routine maintenance. This will allow projects approved in the past by the Hall and Buildings Committee, which could not be afforded at the time, and other work which might be identified, to be progressed when more normal conditions return post-COVID. The fund, to be called "The Buildings Improvement (Designated) Fund", will be under the control of the Churchwardens and Treasurer but unrestricted so that the PCC would be able to move money into general funds for other purposes if that were necessary.

The PCC agreed that a letter should be sent to David Page's relatives outlining, along the lines of the resolution, how his legacy might be used. **Action RM**

In the light of the Church's reduced income with the drop off of Giving and Hall income the potential for a Giving campaign was discussed. Ideas such as a weekly newsletter, a giving appeal letter, and a special 'TV style' broadcast were suggested. DH asked if any PCC member felt they could take on the role of leading this effort. Because there was not a volunteer, DH said it would have to be shelved.

Agenda Item 6 – Ministerial Status

David Howell reported that Bishop Olivia had been in discussion with Derek and Hayley about Derek's return to work. DH said that no decision had yet been taken but any return would initially be on a part time basis with a transition period of 6 to 8 weeks. DH informed that it was planned to have a curate appointed to give Derek support. FC expressed the view that it would be more sensible to have the curate in place prior to Derek returning. DH explained that he was concerned that the promises made at the APCM by the Area Dean to have a curate attached to St Barnabas quickly were not being fulfilled.

Agenda item 7 – Private Prayer and Prayer Group

RM sought views from Members on whether the Thursday morning Private Prayer sessions should continue in the winter. Those involved in stewarding the sessions WH, SD, RC and FC were all in favour of continuation. A change of timing was discussed but it was agreed to maintain the current arrangements. The PCC agreed to continue the sessions and RM agreed to produce an updated rota. **Action RM**

SD explained that she had been approached about the possibility of having a Prayer Group on Thursday afternoons. This proposal was discussed and the PCC agreed in principle that there could be such a group conditional on approval of a risk assessment. Taking account of the need to limit numbers and DH's concern about blocking the view towards the front of the church, it was agreed to have six chairs positioned at the top end of the Nave either side of the aisle. It was noted that owing to COVID-19 regulations the Chancel must only be used by ministers and those leading services (which would include an organist) so that deep cleaning does not become necessary before each service. SD agreed to take the matter forward and produce a risk assessment. DH said he would help. **Action SD and DH**

Agenda item 8 – Opening St Barnabas for Public Worship

Following wide ranging discussion of the issues associated with opening the Church:

- The parochial church council of St Barnabas Church Emmer Green, having received numerous requests from parishioners for the resumption of the celebration of Holy Communion in the Church; and also the parochial church council itself wanting the celebration of Holy Communion every Sunday to resume, as required by Canon B 14, but this not being able to happen owing to the Vicar being on long-term sick leave; resolved unanimously that a request in writing be sent to the Area Dean and Bishop of Reading for the provision of clergy to preside at celebrations of Holy Communion in the Parish Church every Sunday as a matter of urgency.

Action DH

The PCC agreed that a risk assessment should be produced for worship in the church.

Action DH

Agenda item 9 – Upcoming Services

All Souls

Mark Burton reported that planning for the service was on course. He advised that the Rev Margaret Dimmick and her husband Robert would be involved. Concerns about certain names were clarified.

Remembrance Sunday

Following discussion it was decided to have an open air service in front of the open main doors of the church. Guy Watt would be invited to play the trumpet [sec note: Guy has agreed] . To ensure the service was heard microphones and speakers would be used. Recorded music would be played. There would be no singing. Those attending would be expected to social distance and wear masks. It was agreed that a specific risk assessment needed to be produced – **Action MB**. WH raised the issue of poppies and agreed to progress the matter - **Action WH**. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to Church Members to tell them about the service. Which will take place at 10.50am on Sunday 8th November – **Action RM**.

Agenda item 10 – Hall

DH informed that use of the Hall has not returned to normal levels. At the moment only 5 regular users have returned. The situation with ‘Uniformed Groups’ is unclear, although they will possibly return after half term. BA reported that Hall takings are around £2000 below normal this trimester. The PCC members expressed their thanks to Jon Barclay for all his hard work particularly related to opening the Hall with Covid restrictions.

Agenda item 11 - APCM

RM requested feedback from members on the APCM. No issues were raised outwith those covered by the agenda.

Agenda item 12 – Pastoral Care

DH expressed his concern that the Pastoral Care system wasnt working effectively. Using the example of a church member who had been in hospital for two weeks without anyone in the Church knowing he wondered what could be done better and whether the PCC membership as a whole should be more involved and have access to the Pastoral Care contact spreadsheet. In discussion, concerns about data privacy and confidentiality rules were highlighted. It was agreed to continue with those who are currently authorised to have access for the time being. FC noted that the Pastoral Care current focus was on the elderly but she expressed concern for those with young families especially at this time when many services to alleviate pressure cannot be accessed.

Agenda item 13 - Communications

FC reported that there had been little change to the website and that Elizabeth Tyler had resumed her prayer posts. RM said the main vehicle of communication had been letters to Church Members. MB reported that he had become an editor of the Church of England website – “A Church Near You” and that he was in the process of updating the St Barnabas area.

Agenda Item 14 – Living with Loss

SD reported that there had been two sessions. They had been unsatisfactory in terms of comfort and intimacy. She advised that in future there would be two groups: one meeting by Zoom and one physically in the Parish Centre for those who are less happy using Zoom.

Any other business

DH informed the meeting about two funerals, a wedding request and the consolidation of the electricity supply contracts into one with BG Light.

Closing Prayer

Susie closed the meeting with a prayer.