

ST BARNABAS CHURCH, EMMER GREEN, READING

Minutes of Meeting 02/2021 of the PCC held on Tuesday 27th April 7.30pm by Zoom

1, Present

Rev Derek Chandler (Chair) (DC), Rev Leonard Onugha (LO), David Howell (Churchwarden) (DH), Mark Burton (MB), Richard Cunningham (RC), Bob Abel (Treasurer) (BA), Felicity Chapman (FC), Susie Downer (SD), Wendy Howell (WH), Irene Lindsay (IL), Noel Drury (ND), Roger Moore (RM) (PCC Secretary)

2. Opening Remarks and Prayers

DC opened the meeting by recounting a meeting between John and Eileen Volland and Russell Brand in the woods at Greys Court and the invitation to worship at St Barnabas which Russell Brand took up on Sunday 25th. Derek shared a clip from YouTube of a Russell Brand video describing his tattoos and his philosophy of life. Derek posed the question: "What would you say to Russell Brand about why you are a Christian?"

Derek concluded with a prayer.

3. Welcome

DC welcomed Irene and Noel and thanked them for volunteering to join the PCC.

4. Elections and Confirmation of Appointments

RM remarked that there were a number of administrative matters to be dealt with.

RM outlined the reason why Noel Drury was not elected at the APCM and the PCC resolved unanimously to co-opt Noel.

RM explained that Richard Cunningham had previously been a member of the PCC as a Churchwarden and needed to be elected now that he had stepped down from that role. The PCC resolved unanimously to elect Richard.

The PCC confirmed the appointments of: Bob Abel as Treasurer, Roger Moore as Secretary, and Richard Cunningham as Electoral Roll Officer.

It was noted that Bill Harper had been appointed Independent Examiner at the APCM.

RM proposed David Howell as Lay Vice Chair, this was agreed unanimously.

RM noted that Sidesmen would need to be appointed at a future date as this function had now been passed to the PCC.

5. Apologies for Absence

All PCC members were present.

6. Approval of Minutes 01/2021

The minutes were approved unanimously and RM signed on behalf of DC

7. Actions and Matters Arising

All the actions had been completed.

8. PCC Role

DC opened discussion and then invited members of the PCC to comment. Members provided a variety of views on the role of the PCC and also what the church should be like going forward including the importance of: providing encouragement and support, defining a strategy for the 'new normal', helping people back into the world, caring for the elderly who are now less able than 12 months ago, keeping in mind the general public, seizing the opportunity to think deeply and clearly about what should be done, recognizing the injured in our church and community and the importance of children and families.

9. Health and Safety

No issues reported. RM reported that Douglas Rae, the Health and Safety Officer, wished to relinquish the role. No potential candidate was identified. DH emphasised the importance of personal responsibility for H&S and the need for all PCC members to take action when necessary.

10. Safeguarding

No issues reported. RM stated that he had received a written report (Annex A) from Joy Abel the Safeguarding Officer.

11. Election of Members of the Standing Committee

RM explained that the Standing Committee is to consist of the Minister, Churchwarden(s), and at least two other members of the PCC. RM proposed that the Treasurer and Secretary should be members in order to facilitate business. This was agreed unanimously.

RM asked if any other member of the PCC wished to join the Standing Committee. Wendy Howell volunteered. This was put to a vote and Wendy was elected.

12. Reconnecting with young families

DC reported that a working group had met twice (12th & 25th April), to assess the most appropriate ways of reconnecting with young families in Emmer Green over the coming Summer. Four all age fun events were being planned:

- Sat 15th May 1.00-2.30pm Teddy Bears Picnic for Pentecost
- Sat 19th June 1.00-2.30pm All Age Rounders Match
- July TBA
- August TBA

DC noted that the group would next meet on Tuesday 25th May. He raised a number of questions for consideration by the PCC in due course including: "what is the goal of this? are we simply seeking to re-establish what we did before in relation to ministry to young families? Will that even be possible this year."

DC invited PCC members to give their views. The contributions included: the importance of talking to families and establishing what they want, the possibility of developing parenting sessions possibly with other local churches, adopting a simple approach, having a warm and friendly atmosphere, re-establishing and developing connections with schools, using local specialist help for example youth workers and RE inspired team, avoid taking on too much, learn lessons from past initiatives, offer free coffee and cake to mums on the school run.

13. Sustainable Online Worship

FC introduced the paper which had been distributed to PCC members. DC invited comments. LO commented that the paper was a thorough piece of work. However, he wondered if it would not be better if, instead of identifying technical solutions to what are the problems being faced currently, the work concentrated on what might be required in the longer term. He outlined the idea of an integrated solution of people and technology aimed at delivering an online function tailored to the needs of St Barnabas recognising the desires of the church and the capabilities available.

In discussion, DC expressed his concerns at the sustainability of the current set up with its reliance on a few key members and his and LO's smart phones. It was noted that there was too heavy a burden on Felicity to be present every Sunday.

It was agreed to have a small working group consisting of FC, MB and RM to develop a functional specification for PCC agreement followed by the production of technical specification. The group to be led by MB. **Action MB**

14. Flourishing Together in Church Leadership

DC asked MB to give an overview of the issue and highlight key issues and suggested actions these are detailed below.

Background

Based on the Diocesan employment policy "Dignity and Respect in Ministry and at Work Policy", which we must apply. Anyone with any role in the Church – whether paid or not – is employed.

The policy feels negative, so Flourishing Together gives a positive approach – focussing on what we should do rather than avoiding what we shouldn't do.

Issue

Most people who behave inappropriately are unaware that they are doing so.

Difficulty in challenging inappropriate behaviour

We have duty to challenge inappropriate behaviour.

When it happens to us we may not challenge, but either react aggressively ourselves, or out of British reserve say nothing (but go away harbouring negative feelings). Similarly, people may not challenge other's inappropriate behaviour – or we may not challenge because we do not realise the person is acting inappropriately.

Basis

First and foremost, we are all Christians, whatever role we have (see p5 last para & p4 last para).

Self-Care Audit (pp9-11) is worth doing.

PCC Code of Conduct

Recommendation: We should produce a PCC Code of Conduct (see p15).

Team working

The PCC should act as a team (see pp32-33)

Recommendation: We should hold an annual PCC Away Day

A safe Church environment (p34)

Any kind of bullying, manipulation, gaslighting, abuse of power or position has no place in a church. Those who are aware of it have a responsibility to challenge it, and we all have a duty to protect and support those who fall victim to it.

MNB

15. Regathering the Church

DC introduced this agenda by posing for consideration by the PCC a number of questions: what sort of church community are we now? What do we aspire to become? Members indicated a strong desire for a return of in person fellowship with the opportunity to have a chat over a cup of tea. Some were genuinely excited by the prospect of regathering, others were concerned. Others expressed the desire to reinstate Bible study groups. Whilst regathering was seen as critical, the importance of maintaining and developing the online service was also seen as important. It was suggested that this would become more important for the elderly. The importance of learning from past initiatives was identified. Identifying lost sheep and bringing them back into the fold.

16. Any other business

FC reported that she was working on risk assessments for the choir to resume rehearsals and for individual musicians to practice the piano and organ in church. She proposed that these are circulated separately and requested feedback, comments, approval within a week of them being sent out.

She reported that representatives of the choir would talk to the ministry team about the best way to reintroduce the choir to services.

16. Dates of Future Meetings:

APCM Tuesday 23rd March at 7,30pm by Zoom

Standing Committee: Tuesday 22nd June, Tuesday 7th Sep, Tuesday 9th Nov

PCC: Tuesday 29th June, Tuesday 14th Sep, Tuesday 16th Nov

Annex A

SAFEGUARDING

I have had no new issues of concern brought to my attention up to this point.

Safeguarding and DBS checks are being set in motion for Irene Lindsay and Noel Drury as new PCC members with the help of Debbie Burton.

Due to changes in the definition of safeguarding levels and requirements I am currently reviewing the lists of what is needed and by whom within the church. Most course levels can now be completed on line. I will be contacting individuals as necessary to encourage them to complete the relevant courses as appropriate.

Joy Abel
23 April 2021