

MINUTES

Present: Revd. Henry Curran, Stacey Mutch, Ian Knight, Kathryn Hubbard, Joyce Cooper, Rosie Adsley, Kate Curran, Becca Haines, Jonathan Larsson, Chris Drew, Fiona Houghton. Lawrence Ward was present for items 1-3 and 7.

1. **Opening Prayer**

Led by Chris.

2. **Apologies**

Debs Hunt.

3. **Minutes of previous meeting (19th November 2019)**

Approved and signed.

a. **Action Points and Matters arising**

Item 5: Work is underway to explore the possibility of employing a Director of Music.

Item 9: Henry and the churchwardens wrote to Crossteach as agreed. [details redacted]. Becca led us in prayer.

Item 12: [redacted – discussion on Lawrence's request to play the organ before every service].

Item 12: Henry reported that after consideration he didn't feel it was right to get rid of favourite hymns with old-fashioned language, but could explain the words during services. However, Henry had forgotten to do this on the most recent occasion. **Action: Kathryn** to mark in our database hymns which require some explanation.

7. **Buildings**

We have budgeted £1,000 for repairs to the pipe organ in 2020. We had agreed to cap spending on the organ at £1,000 this year until we know whether an electronic replacement would be feasible. Last year the organ builder David Jones quoted £900 to repair three couplers, which is the most urgent work needed to keep the organ working. As we expect to spend £90 each year on tuning the organ, we agreed that *Lawrence will ask the organ builder what work can be carried out for up to £910, and should the repair to three couplers still be available at last year's quoted price, the Standing Committee will make a decision at its meeting in February as to whether or not to go ahead with the work.*

Action: Lawrence. Becca led us in prayer.

The rest of item 7 was deferred to our next meeting due to time constraints. **Action: Henry** to include on next agenda.

10. **Report on Children's Ministry**

Kate proposed that in order to meet the need for a leader on weeks 1 and 3 each month, we accept Gemma Drew's offer to lead Salt group each week 3, and run a joint session for Salt and Light groups on week 1 each month. Debs Hunt is happy to lead this if Kate works on a programme for the sessions. Kate also proposed that Kids' Prayer & Praise, which is normally led by Becca Haines a few times a year on 5th Sundays of the month, could become part of week 1, while we try having all-age services when there is week 5 in a month (so long as this does not fall in school holidays).

We agreed to support Kate in taking forward this proposal and encouraged her to continue work on identifying and training new children's ministry leaders. Stacey led us in prayer.

5. **Safeguarding Report**

There are no safeguarding issues that the PCC should be aware of at present.

a. Appointment of Safeguarding Officer

Stacey proposed and Jonathan seconded *that we appoint Sarah Sim as Safeguarding Officer in place of Debs Hunt.*

6. Review of Christmas services 2019

Carols by Candlelight was well attended, high quality and much appreciated.

Open Air Carols was cancelled at the last minute due to rain, though some people did come and enjoyed mulled wine before going home.

There was some feeling that nothing special happening on the Sunday before Christmas was disappointing.

All-Age Christmas Communion went well and was especially appreciated by the children. As usual there were very few church members present but plenty of visitors.

Henry reflected that our Christmas services in 2019 were good. However, this was our first Christmas for many years without a curate or administrator. With the addition of some pastoral emergencies, Henry felt overwhelmed and did not cope well, suffering from low mood and insomnia. We need to allow for pastoral emergencies, so need to find a way of reducing Henry's Christmas workload next time. Kate led us in prayer.

8. Any Other Business

a. Church weekend

The PCC had decided by e-mail to postpone the church weekend planned for 8-9 February 2020 due to low numbers. We had cancelled the church lunch on 9 February and reinstated normal services. We are now planning a baptism service on 8 March, AGM on 29 March and Maundy Thursday supper on 9 April. We agreed *that on 8 March we will have a church lunch and cancel the evening cafe. On 29 March we will cancel the evening service to encourage attendance at the AGM, and offer the church hall to anyone wishing to bring a picnic, but without any formal church lunch.* Fiona led us in prayer.

9. Date of next meetings

a. Standing Committee: 24 February 2020

b. PCC: 16 March 2020 (Agenda to include Summer Term Programme, Finance Report up to 31 Dec, Connect Groups, Student Ministry, Safeguarding)

4. Vicar's Report

Henry reported that his recent Ministry Development Review was encouraging, but that the Archdeacon was concerned about our lack of numerical growth and failure to pay parish share in full. Henry had explained to the Archdeacon that this parish experiences a high turnover of members and we see a balance of challenges and encouragements. In reply the Archdeacon explained that the diocese expects numerical growth before investing in us further, e.g. by offering another curate, and that if we continue to pay less than full parish share it will have implications for our ministry going forward. Afterwards Henry had spent time reflecting on whether it is time for him to move on from St. Mary's, but felt God calling him to pray and work more to reach our parish with the gospel.

Henry feels we are making progress in most areas of our vision statement, but are weak on C2 (Membership of St. Mary's reflecting the makeup of our communities) and C3 (People becoming disciples through proclamation of the gospel with practical care). We could do more to serve and build relationships with our local community. Henry imagined that our first step if we were planting a new church in this area would be to pray and seek God's wisdom. He was drawn to Proverbs 19:21 "Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand." We agreed *that a focus on outreach to our parish and on points C2 and C3 of our vision is a good way forward.*

Henry asked the PCC to pray and listen for how God wants us to do this. We discussed how to enthuse the wider church about praying for this, for example having a core team excited about it first with invitations to join us, and presenting the parish in a more accessible and human way. We agreed

that each of us will make it a regular part of our personal prayers to pray and listen for God's will for outreach to this parish and to ask God to make us passionate about this vision. Henry also encouraged us to spend time out and about in the parish as we pray for it. We spent an extended time in prayer.

11. Determination of Confidential Items

[redacted]

12. Review of Meeting

We briefly reviewed this meeting.