

**AGM Meeting Minutes – Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 7.30pm on Zoom**

**Present:**

Matt Trendall (Chair), Ann Beaton, Joyce McKenzie, Colin & Pam Baxter, Christine & Brian Norwood, Roger Hancock, Alan & Elizabeth Prockter, Alise Trendall, Ray Holmwood, Adrian & Lisa Rowe, Anthony Tull, Clare Tyers, Jonty Vowles, Lianne Tyers, Jonathan Bailey, Jen Harvey, Melvyn Letts.

**Apologies:**

Mike Anderson, Sheila Anderson, Trish Rosewell.

1. **Opening devotions:** the meeting opened with last Sunday's reading of Colossians 3:15-17 and prayer.
2. **Election of churchwardens:** Ray Holmwood is stepping down after 16 years as churchwarden. Matt proposed a hearty vote of thanks for Ray's huge contribution and Ray was presented (virtually!) with a painting of the church by Brian. Roger Hancock was re-elected unanimously to serve as churchwarden. Matt proposed a second vote of thanks to Roger, especially for his sterling work during lockdown.
3. **Apologies:** see above.
4. **Minutes of 2019 ACM:** accepted as a true record of the meeting nem. con..
5. **Matters arising:**
  - a. *Buildings update:* the attached report noted the completion of two major projects in 2019-20 – the chancel roof replacement and the new boiler. Both were generously paid for by grants, from MK Council and Townlands Charity respectively. Three other important pieces of work in the churchyard were also completed – a large lime tree was removed (thanks to our neighbour Ted Payton, who paid for the work); the churchyard wall abutting Ted' garden was repaired (again, thanks to Ted for paying half the costs – the rest may be covered by a grant from Townlands); and we paid to clear and turf the area opposite the East Window. The proposed Garden of Rest has had to be postponed until 2021 owing to the pandemic.
  - b. *Finance update:* Mike sent his apologies. Matt gave a summary our current financial position, which is that our giving has held up well since lockdown and we don't expect to dip into reserves this year. However, the Strange bequest is now spent and forecasts for next year look more challenging. The accounts are still in preparation and will be reviewed separately by the stewards' council.
  - c. *Church membership:* Matt advised the meeting that St Mary's currently has 75 full members and 15 associate members. (Associate members tend to be partners of members and/or their children.) This compares with equivalent figures in 2019 of 69 and 24, and in 2018 of 67 and 31 respectively. We now calculate Electoral Roll Membership differently – counting all Anglicans, no URC/Baptists/Methodists (to avoid double counting) and ¼ of 'Others' – this means that Electoral Roll membership currently totals 58.

**6. Elections**

a. Election of Church Stewards:

(Note: Roger Hancock ex officio council member as Churchwarden, & Matt as Rector)

- i. Mike Anderson (Treasurer)
- ii. Joyce McKenzie (Discipleship)
- iii. Ann Beaton (Mission)
- iv. Trish Rosewell (Communications)
- v. Brian Norwood (Building & Maintenance)
- vi. Jonathan Bailey – new role yet to be agreed. Matt welcomed Jonathan as a new steward to the Council, and introduced him briefly to the meeting. Jonathan joined our church in mid-2019 and has been a great blessing to us already. We are delighted that he has agreed to serve.

- b. MK/WCP link posts:
  - i. Ann Beaton re-elected as Mission Partnership Link – 1 post unfilled
  - ii. Joyce Fennell & Ann Beaton re-elected as our Walton Churches Partnership reps
  - iii. Anthony Tull has agreed to serve again as Deanery Synod rep for 2020-23

All appointments were proposed by Jen Harvey, seconded by Pam Baxter and elected unanimously.

- 7. **Safeguarding** and re-appointment of Safeguarding Officer and Responsible Adult (previously known as Children's Advocate). Since 2019 a new policy has been added to our main Safeguarding Policy for meeting safely online. This is particularly important in the current season where our groups are meeting online. Otherwise the current policy is unchanged from last year. Rachael Jenkins is planning a major re-write in time for next year's AGMs in the Spring. Accepting the latest/current policy was proposed by Roger Hancock, seconded by Jonty Vowles and agreed unanimously.

Rachael Jenkins (as Safeguarding Officer), Ann Beaton (as Responsible Adult) and Joyce McKenzie (Health & Safety Officer) were all proposed by Lisa Rowe, seconded by Lianne Tyers and re-appointed unanimously. Matt proposed a vote of thanks to all for their continued work in these important areas.

- 8. **Rector's Report:** attached separately in meeting pack. Matt also reflected on the following:

**Pioneer Post and future plans** – Matt gave a brief resumee of what had happened over the last couple of years, and where we are now. In summary, version 4 of the post was being funded by the Church of England's Strategic Development Unit, via a bid from Oxford Diocese. This had required a lot more paperwork, the final draft of which had been signed off in early April. However, on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 10 days before the deadline, we had been advised by the diocese that, as part of their bid, funding for the post was going to be cut by 10%. In the current season, and with the unknown cultural changes being forced by the pandemic, both the St Mary's Stewards and the WCP Council felt that this level of financial exposure was no longer tenable and we had no option but to withdraw. So the bid went ahead without us, and a paid post on the new estate is now off the cards for the foreseeable future. Whilst this process had been very painful, Matt still felt confident that God was going to do something special in a different way. He encouraged the meeting to pray for at least 8 Christians to move onto the new estate, to feel a sense of call and to meet each other (and us). In faith, something more 'organic' and homegrown may be able to start next year.

**Walton LEP's registration as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation** – the other big item which will be a major part of the work of the WCP this Autumn and Spring is our registration with the Charities Commission as a CIO. By law, this needs to happen by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021. The initial process is fairly straightforward as the model constitution and partnership agreement has been agreed by the denominations, with only a few blanks to fill in. We will also need to guarantee our position as regards the Baptist Pension liability, and transfer the assets into the new entity by the deadline. The bigger work regarding our Operating Procedures and our financial arrangements will take us through the rest of 2021. Matt was keen to reassure the meeting that the effect on our day-to-day life and ministry will be minimal, but the process sets us on a much firmer legal footing. The CIO will support the mission and ministry of the congregations and provide a secure platform for that.

- 9. **Questions/Feedback:** there were no immediate questions.
- 10. **Any other business:** Ray and Brian are re-affixing the sign on the churchyard wall this week.
- 11. **Closing Devotions** – the meeting closed at 8.25pm with prayer.