



St. Mark's Church Parochial Church Council

Minutes of PCC Meeting 7 October 2020



The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mark, Bedford Charity Number 1164416.
All minutes are available on our website www.stmarkschurch.com

The meeting followed from a service of morning worship and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The following people had been elected as Trustees of St Mark's Church

Ex Officio

Charles Royden (Chair - Ordained Priest), Sam Cappleman (Ordained Priest), Mike Cooper (Church Warden), Jim Williams (Church Warden & Assistant Treasurer), Wendy Waters (Reader), Laura Farthing (Deanery Synod Rep), Linda Parry (Deanery Synod Rep), Tim Wilkes (Deanery Synod Rep), Ian Farthing (Church Treasurer),

Leadership Team - (Wardens in Waiting) Alan Kirk, Laura Farthing, Liz Jackson, Janet Warren,
Elected Representatives (ie not ex officio)

Mick Ovenden, Margaret Appleton, Janet Day (Safeguarding), Vincent Holloway, Edward Parry, Lynne Seymour, Jean Kirk, Graham Brown, Jaana Swaaby, Joan York, Margaret Appleton, Mike Warren, Marion Prior, John Day, Janet Ibberson, Avril Williams (Electoral Roll Officer), Elizabeth Bean, Morag Stewart, Barry Southam.

Youth Representative Aletta Swaaby

Members of Staff attending Wendy Rider (Centre Manager), Helen Harpin (Preschool), Sue Jones (Preschool)

Apologies

Wendy Waters

Minutes of the previous meeting Minutes of the 9 June online meeting were agreed.

Worship Issues

Charlie reported that the two Sunday Communion Services are working well and that numbers are growing at both the 9.30 and 11.00 services. The services are also being uploaded to YouTube. Members were asked to contact Charlie if it was felt that any changes or additions could be made.

Church Leadership Report

Mike reported on how the church has coped well during these difficult times. The Telecare Team has maintained important contact with members of the church community, even though home visits and the Wednesday Bereavement Group have had to be suspended. Our Wednesday Zoom services continue to be very well supported.

The premises have reopened for lettings, thanks to Wendy and the measures that have been taken to ensure the safety of all who visit.

Preschool have continued to operate right through and are operating with 3 Bubbles for the children. Thanks to Helen, Sue and all the staff for their continued hard work.

With all of the restrictions continuing, we made the decision to cancel the Harvest weekend, but are delighted that The Bishop of St Albans will still attend our Harvest Services on Sunday 17 October. Also, the decision was made to incorporate the Commemoration Service into the two Sunday Services.

Centre Management

Premises

Wendy reported on how the period of closure had enabled the premises to be decorated throughout including the flat. Thanks to Dave and Janet for this.

Bookings

The Church premises are now fully open, with strict procedures in place. Groups must provide copies of their Risk Assessments and comply with the Church's Risk Assessment. All groups have indicated that they will return at some point. Six have so far returned and two new groups have started. Thanks were recorded to Erica, who has retired, for her work as an office volunteer and thanks to all the volunteers who ensure the efficient running of the Church Centre.

Finance

Ian gave details of the full financial year, ending 31 August 2020.

Main Account

Income £147 061 Expenditure £158 231 Deficit of £11 170. However, Ian had applied for a business support grant for loss of income during the lockdown period with the excellent news that the application had been successful and we had been awarded a grant of £10 000. This had reduced the deficit to £1 170. Actual income was 86% of budget Expenditure 94% of budget. Ian advised that there had been exceptional support from members of the congregation and that we achieved 101% of budgeted income from offerings.

Since the start of the new financial year the flat had been re-let.

Pre School

Income £186 302 Expenditure £182 810 Surplus of £3 491. Given the lower numbers during the lockdown period, this was again a good outcome.

Garden of Remembrance

Income £24 324 Expenditure £18 645 Surplus of £5 678.

Given the very difficult circumstances, the final year end results had been far better than could have been expected and Ian was thanked for his very hard work in ensuring the church's finances were in order.

Pre-school

All is running well. Three bubbles are being operated for the children and staff, which is working well. Charlie, Ian Janet and Mike are in contact with Helen and Sue to ensure any issues are addressed immediately. One to one cover is to be arranged for one child.

Members again expressed their thanks for the excellent work Helen, Sue and all the staff were doing at such a difficult and stressful time.

Storybox

Unfortunately, it had not been possible to reintroduce Storybox at this time.

Chat and Play

Sessions have restarted and were running well. Thanks to Janine for ensuring this could happen.

Junior Church

Activities were continuing to be included in Parish News, thanks once again to Janine for arranging this.

Pastoral Support

Wendy Waters gave a written update to members. The main means of providing pastoral care continues to be through Telecare. Most of the 45 households on the list are now called about every 10 days by Jean, Sally and Val. Those called are most appreciative and a few people's situation has been shared with me and/or Charlie as appropriate. A number of the wider

congregation are also keeping in touch with one another by phone. We are fairly confident that most people are getting the support they require. Although I have concerns that, due the necessity for social distancing, we are not picking up pastoral needs through informal chats after services. If you become aware of anyone who is unwell or has any other pastoral need please let me, Charlie or Sam know. It's better for us to be told twice than not at all.

So far Bereavement follow up calls have not presented any significant issues, which is slightly surprising bearing in mind the restrictions on visits to hospitals and care homes, and the limited number who can attend funerals. The ability to live stream services has helped reduce the distress caused by these limitations.

Home visits, Home Communion, delivery of flowers to those who are unwell, and the Bereavement Support Coffee Morning are all still suspended. Charlie is consulting the Diocese about whether the delivery of flowers can resume.

Sadly the afternoon Commemoration Service will not be held this year. Instead during both 1st of November morning services, if requested, names of the deceased will be read out and candles lit. Letters will be sent to those bereaved over the past year to explain this and to point out that they can book to attend either of these services.

Thank you to everyone for your support of one another over the last 6 months.

Garden of Remembrance

All is continuing well. The new area, Willow, opened at the beginning of the year. The marble seat has been placed in front of the Water feature in memory of John & Mary Stubbs. Mary of course administered the Garden for many years. In this new area we have had 9 interments, 1 Interment in the Columbaria and 3 reservations. Since April last year in the main area we have had 5 reservations and 30 interments. 6 interments will take place in October. Our grateful thanks go to Malcolm and Jean who take excellent care of the Garden and are very dedicated.

Safeguarding

All current measures continue. Training is currently online for PCC members. Thanks to Janet, our Safeguarding Officer, for continuing to ensure all safeguarding requirements are met. DBS checks will be put in place for new PCC members.

Mission Matters

Sadly, the planned Mission weekend has had to be cancelled but we are delighted that Bishop Alan will still be at our two Harvest Services on 18 October. Because of difficulties in setting up our own mission project, the Leadership Team agreed that we should support the Bishops Mission Appeal this year.

Deanery Matters

Sam advised that the Diocesan budget was currently being approved. The strain on parishes over the past few months was recognised and, at this stage, it was not felt that the budget would increase.

A.O.B

A meeting of the Open House Trustees will be held week commencing 12 October to review matters now that Day Centers are reopening in Bedford

Dates of next meetings

PCC meeting dates will be reviewed at the Leadership Team meeting.

With no further business the meeting closed at 11.35am

Please note Dates of Meetings

Leadership Meetings: 9 December 2020; 27 January 2021; 10 March 2021

APCM: 14 April 2021

PCC Meetings: 10 February 2021; 14 April 2021 (following APCM); 30 June 2021