

**MEETING OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL  
OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, EAST DULWICH**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 April 2016**

**Present:** The Ven Dr. Bill Jacob (Chair), Christine Camplin, Anne Coates, Libby Coates, Alan Croft, Natasha D'Souza, Sarah Goudge, Sally Gross, Ben Hunt, Ola Jibona, Rachel Mills, James Nurton, Tayo Olatunde, Alistair Read, Joy Taylor, Vince Turner (part of meeting) and Julie Whitney..

*In attendance: Dorothy Oxley*

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Anne Clarke, Martin Howell, Malcolm King, Gill Nash, Tayo Olatunde and Michael Robinsion

**2. Welcome and opening prayer**

Bill opened the meeting with prayer, reminding the PCC that they were on God's business and responsible on behalf of the congregation and the parish for the mission and ministry of St John's, and praying that they would be guided and wise.

**3. Welcome to new members and introduction to the role of the PCC**

3.1 Fr Bill welcomed the new members of the PCC and encouraged them to ask questions if there was something they didn't understand – it was quite likely some of the existing members didn't understand it either!

3.2 He explained that the PCC:

- Is a Trustee body, responsible for the activities, premises, and finances of the church (the latter is not just the Treasurer's responsibility). Budgeting must reflect the church's priorities in terms of growth and development, and more money will be needed to do this.
- Works with the incumbent, discussing, planning and making decisions jointly, in terms of pastoral work, evangelism, liturgy (orders of service, etc.), social responsibility and relationships with other churches and other faiths.
- Has a responsibility to the Deanery and the Diocese. The church contributes financially to the Diocese, which funds the parish priest and many other resources which the church can use.
- Is responsible for the people who are employed by the PCC
- Is elected by the congregation and has a corporate responsibility to represent the views of the congregation. If big and difficult decisions have to be made, there must be wide consultation as there needs to be a sense of ownership.
- Is responsible for the mission of the church in East Dulwich, so PCC members need always to be mindful of the question 'What does it mean to be the 'body of Christ?' in East Dulwich', and to respond to the needs and challenges of this. This is why the Mission Action Plan was developed, to identify priorities to get this happening.
- Needs to make use of the resources of the congregation, and the skills and capacities of this very gifted group of people.
- Needs to communicate well within its own meetings, with the people of the church and also with the wider community.

3.3 There is a Standing Committee/Staff Team, responsible for routine activities between PCC meetings.

3.4 Fr Bill referred to the circulated document 'PCCs and How to Survive Them' which had been

taken from a Diocesan training course. One of the things this covered was the way members of the PCC behaved to each other, at and outside meetings, for example:

- Everyone round the table is on an equal footing, including the vicar.
- There will be differences of views and it is important to respect everyone's individual views and to be willing to listen, and treat each other with dignity. Good decisions are made when this happens – less good decisions when it does not.
- It is very easy, if you feel strongly about something, just to keep on talking – it is part of the responsibility of the Chair to stop that happening.
- It's tempting, after a meeting, to say 'Well, I don't agree with that' and to moan about what has happened – but if anyone is unhappy about something, they should say so at the time. You may not be the only person.
- It is also important to be respectful to people who are not present – don't say negative things about people who aren't there to defend themselves.
- It is also very easy to break up into little groups or make comments under your breath for your neighbour's benefit, or sigh, or, when talking afterwards, to twist and misrepresent what people have said. This is unfair to the person and should not happen.
- The PCC is a body of Christian people, and while we all know Christians don't always behave particularly well towards one another, we should all try, and admit when we've got it wrong.
- It is important for everyone to work together, and not form informal alliances to get their own way, or to defeat or exclude people.
- It is vital to work together, to be involved together, and to have responsibility before God and the church to promote the Gospel in this part of East Dulwich.

3.5 Bill invited questions and comments, and Anne Coates pointed out that there will sometimes be matters discussed by the PCC which must remain confidential.

3.6 In response to a question from Natasha, Anne explained the roles of the Deanery and the Diocesan Synod, and Bill added that the Diocese is a charity in its own right.

3.7 Those present then introduced themselves, briefly outlining their areas of work both inside and outside of St John's. Bill commented that this showed an interesting range of experience and activities.

3.8 He pointed out that the demography of the Parish showed a high proportion of people within the age range between 35 and 50, and the church needed to think about developing its mission to children and young people and supporting parents, also further developing the relationship with the school which would have a new Head in the autumn. Joseph Bell, currently the acting Head Teacher at Holy Trinity Primary, Forest Hill, had been appointed and would start in September, though this had to be kept confidential until the announcement the following day,

#### **4. Approval of Minutes of the meeting on 15 March 2016**

A number of corrections (largely typographical errors) were made to the minutes which had been circulated, and it was agreed that the corrected version should be circulated then approved and signed,.

#### **5. Appointment of PCC Secretary**

Dorothy confirmed that she was willing to continue as PCC Secretary (non-voting) and this was proposed by Bill Jacob, seconded by Joy Taylor and **agreed**.

#### **6. Election of Officers**

- 6.1 **Treasurer:** Bill Jacob proposed, and Alistair Read seconded, that Sarah Goudge should continue as Treasurer, which she was willing to do. Sarah's election as Treasurer was **agreed**.
- 6.2 **Vice Chair:** Ben Hunt proposed Rachel Mills because, as had been recognised at the APCM, her long experience would be useful during the interregnum. Libby Coates seconded this and Rachel's election as Vice-Chair was **agreed**.
- 6.3 **Election of Deputy Churchwardens:** A paper had been circulated and there had also been a discussion and vote on this at the APCM. Bill suggested that the best way to handle this would be for Rachel and Joy to ask people to do things with which they needed help, so they could choose a range of people, ensuring that nobody was over-burdened. For example, the sidespeople could look after things at the back of the church during mass, and do the 'counts' of members of the congregation which had to take place on certain days. There could also perhaps be a rota of people to sort out the chairs after Mass on a Sunday. In discussion the following points were raised:
- A plan of how the chairs should be set out should be made available somewhere in the church, perhaps with a marker indicating where the back row starts, so people could know, for example after a Fayre, where things should go.
  - The APCM had agreed that it would be the churchwardens who led the process of appointing their deputies. (Bill agreed but said he had suggested the alternative as it was important that more people should be drawn into taking responsibility.)
  - Members of the PCC should be available to support the churchwardens at any time.
  - The Churchwardens could perhaps write a list of the things that they do, and divide up things that could be done by others (though there are some things which only the Churchwardens can do).
  - Rachel and Joy should take the lead on things that need to be done, so these can be sorted and shared out.
  - There are several past Churchwardens in the congregation who could be called upon to help.

Ben Hunt proposed that Rachel and Joy, as Churchwardens should look to others, including members of the PCC, for support, act on this and report to the next meeting. Libby asked if both Churchwardens were happy with this, and Joy and Rachel would discuss this as they settle into their new role.

**Action: Rachel Mills and Joy Taylor**

- 6.4 **Parish safeguarding team:** This is quite small, and currently consisted of Bill Jacob, Libby Coates, Tina Hampson and Laura Williams who, pro tem, is helping with training and briefing issues. Bill has asked Laura Corbin if she would also like to be involved. Natasha explained that she has quite a lot of experience in this area as a teacher and has a qualification in safeguarding, and would be willing to join the team. Bill will contact her about the diocesan training available.

**Action: Bill Jacobs, Natasha D'Souza**

With Bill about to leave, it was suggested that there should be some men on the Safeguarding team, and Libby offered to identify some men in the congregation who might be willing to undertake this.

**Action: Libby Coates**

Bill confirmed that the Safeguarding Team looks at safeguarding vulnerable adults, as well as children.

## **7. Appointment of Co-options**

The PCC have the capacity to appoint up to 4 co-options, but Bill asked if, given the number of elected places and those attending under other capacities, such as Deanery Synod

representatives, this was necessary. He suggested it might be better to hold all or some of the co-opted places over until after Gill O'Neill had joined the Parish, and also to do an audit of skills among PCC members (suggested previously and already in progress) so that any skills gaps or particular needs could be identified. The co-opted places would then afford an opportunity to meet those needs.

The co-options the previous year had been:

- **Alastair McCulloch**, who could not be an automatic 'clergy' member of the PCC as he was not licensed in the Diocese, so had previously been co-opted. It was **agreed** that he should be co-opted again.
- **Eurica Shaw**; Dorothy had however noted from Diocesan information (and Christine confirmed) that an SPA commissioned to a parish was automatically on the PCC, so did not need to be co-opted.<sup>1</sup> Dorothy would check the SPA's voting status, but thought Eurica would have full voting rights. It was noted that Sarah Phillips had also been put forward for SPA training; if she was in due course commissioned, she also would be automatically on the PCC.

**Action: Dorothy Oxley**

- **Elizabeth Stanton**: Elizabeth had been Secretary of the Finance Committee and had also been a Churchwarden in the past (including during the last interregnum so might be able to provide valuable support during the interim period until Gill O'Neill took up post). She had also been involved in a Stewardship campaign, and Rachel Mills suggested that she should be again co-opted. Bill suggested however that Elizabeth should be invited to remain Secretary of the Finance Committee, but not co-opted to the PCC.

Bill would contact Eurica and Elizabeth to put them in the picture.

**Action: Bill Jacob**

## **8. Appointments to Committees**

- 8.1 **Standing Committee/Staff Team**: This currently consisted of all the Clergy, the SPA, the Treasurer and the Churchwardens, with the PCC Secretary taking minutes.
- 8.2 **Finance Committee**: This consisted of the Incumbent, the Churchwardens, the Treasurer, the Parish Clerk (both the latter offices currently being held by Sarah Goudge), Alistair Read (Treasurer of the Goose Green Centre) and Secretary (currently Elizabeth Stanton)
- 8.3 **Premises Committee**: The Churchwardens call upon people on an ad hoc basis, depending on the issues – for example, Sally Gross helped with the problems surrounding the trees.
- 8.4 **Goose Green Centre Sub-Committee**: Ben Hunt was happy to continue as a PCC representative, and would be joined by Libby Coates and Joy Taylor. Rachel Mills would also continue in her role as Churchwarden. Dorothy Oxley (Secretary) and Alistair Read (Treasurer) would both continue as co-opted members. The Electoral Roll members appointed from the APCM would be Helen Hunt and Ken Deller.
- 8.5 **School Governor**: As Ben Hunt had stepped down as a Governor of St John's and St Clement School, a new governor needed to be appointed from the Church; this was open to any member of the congregation, but the person had to be approved or elected by the PCC. Anne Coates suggested advertising this in the pew sheet. Libby Coates suggested that the clear guidance for parent governors could be used to inform the advertisement, which Bill would draft and ask Gareth to put into the pew sheet. Libby would also let Bill, Gareth and Dorothy have a copy of this which could be circulated or made available to anyone who enquired. Applications for the post should be made to the church office. The School were eager to appoint someone by 6 May.

---

<sup>1</sup> There is some confusion now as although I am sure I saw reference to SPAs specifically, I did not note the reference, and the Diocesan office now say that SPAs do not count as '**licensed** lay workers' (who definitely are PCC members) as they are actually **commissioned** lay workers. I'm looking into this further. DO

*Action: Libby Coates, Bill Jacob, Gareth Mills*

**9. Appointment of Charities Co-ordinator, Christian Aid and Children's Society representatives**

- 9.1 **Charities Co-ordinator:** James Nurton was willing to continue in this role.
- 9.2 **Christian Aid representative:** Sarah Goudge was willing to continue and will be speaking on this at the service on 15 May. She would welcome volunteer collectors in North Cross Road on 21 May.
- 9.3 **Children's Society representative:** There is no current representative. Alistair explained that this involved quarterly meetings; he would find out more about the role, and put something in the pew sheet.

*Action: Alistair Read*

**10. Quarterly Finance Report to 31 March 2016**

- 10.1 Sarah reported that expenditure was £12,500+ more than income, but this included payment of insurance for the church, Goose Green centre and the house in Hinckley Road, which covers the entire year (a reduction was made for a single annual payment). Other costs during this quarter included the removal of the trees and the advertising costs and expenses related to the recruitment of a new Vicar. Over £3,000 had been spent on the repair to the window, mainly due to the need for scaffolding. Michael Robinson had made a claim against the insurance for this, and though £1,000 excess would still need to be paid by the Church, the remainder should be paid back to the church by the insurance company.
- 10.2 **Proposed new Bank Account:** Sarah explained that the Church had always had two accounts, one with NatWest and one with Barclays, but the rules had changed in respect of bank charges. If the church's income was under £100,000 they would not have to pay but because it was just over this amount, they had to pay a charge of over 40p. For each direct debit. She suggested opening a new account with CAF (the Charities Aid Foundation), which had been recommended by the Independent Examiner, Barbara Roach and also by the Deanery Synod. A proposal to open this account had to be formally recorded in the Minutes of the PCC in order for CAF to accept this.
- 10.3 Sarah Goudge then proposed and Rachel Mills seconded that an account should be opened with CAF. This was unanimously **agreed**.
- 10.4 **Gift Aid:** Sarah was now ready to make a claim for the first three months of 2014, and Anne Coates proposed, seconded by Alistair Read, that she should be nominated as Interim Gift Aid Officer. This was unanimously **agreed**. Maxine Plunkett had indicated that she would also be willing to work on this.

**11. Review of Holy Week and Easter Services**

- 11.1 It was generally agreed that the services went well on Easter Sunday, the breakfast provided after the dawn Mass (which was itself always very special) was much appreciated and the reflections and music on Good Friday had been excellent. Libby commented that it was very good to see families who did not come very often, and two new ones, coming to the Children's Service on Good Friday.
- 11.2 Sally asked if in future it might be possible not to have church cleaning going on at the same time as the flower arrangers were in the church on Easter Saturday, and this would be borne in mind for next year.

**12. Summer Social Event (11 June)**

- 12.1 The PCC had agreed not to focus on fundraising this year, but to have something which was primarily a social event, such as a barbecue (some funds could be raised by the sale of burgers, etc.) with indoor and outdoor activities for children and adults. Elisabeth Stevenson

and Libby Coates had volunteered to run this.

- 12.2 Libby suggested that in future the Church might liaise with the School, because often the Church held a Fayre, followed by the school's a few weeks later, and it would be better to collaborate on a joint event or perhaps hold both on the same day.

### **13. Any Other Business**

- 13.1 **Young People's fundraising 'brunch' on 15 May:** Julie asked if the PCC would be happy for the young people to do a Brunch after Mass on 15 May to raise funds for Christian Aid, offering such things as bacon butties, sausage sandwiches (including veggie versions) etc. This was agreed, though they would need to be out of the Centre, and with everything cleared up, by 1.00 p.m due to a booking.
- 13.2 **Dementia Awareness Week:** Julie explained that Dementia Friends was an Alzheimer's UK initiative which encouraged people to get a better understanding of dementia through a training session which lasted for between 45 minutes and an hour, and encouraged them to develop action points to help people with dementia in the local community, which would be a good outreach action. Julie, as a 'Dementia Champion', could lead three sessions and asked if the PCC would be willing for her to do one after Mass on 22 May. Rachel explained that this could be done in the Large Hall, but there were baptisms in the church and people would be coming into the foyer. The session would start at 11.45 a.m. It was agreed that this should go on the website and be open to local people not connected to the church, and Anne would also tweet about it.

**Action: Anne Coates**

- 13.3 **'Home for Good':** Bill explained that this was about finding homes for children through fostering and adoption, and they had an initiative to reach out to churches, where they hoped to find people who would be willing to perhaps take on a child. They wanted to give a talk at St John's and had suggested the following possible dates – 29 May, 5 June and 19 June. It was agreed that 29 May would be too soon after the above two events, and was also a Spring bank holiday; 6<sup>th</sup> June was the Children's Service and there was a Pastoral Carers' meeting on 19 June. It was therefore decided that Bill should get back to the group asking for alternative dates.

**Action: Bill Jacob**

- 13.4 **Hedge (on East Dulwich Road side):** Mavis had commented at the APCM about the hedge spreading onto the pavement area. Bill said he had received an estimate for £715 plus VAT for a major cutback of the hedge, and would pass this on to Rachel Mills. Rachel explained that she had spoken to Terry, the regular hedge trimmer, about this and he had said that to cut it right back would require sawing through it, not just trimming, which would leave the hedge very ugly for several months. Sally was concerned both because Terry had done an excellent job with pruning the trees and trimming the hedge, which now looked much better, and also she was concerned if the work was given to someone else, the Church might lose his services; his costs were very reasonable and he always gave extra time.

14. **Date of next meeting:** The next meeting of the PCC will be on **17 May 2016**