**Minutes of St Michael & All Angels PCC Meeting**

**Thursday 16th February 2023 7pm**

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| Image result for st michael line art |  | **Present at meeting:**  Sue Hack - Chair  Vivien Moffitt  Margaret Minchin  Rev. Natalie Jennings  Karilyn Collins  Sarah Rogers (Minutes) | **Apologies:**  Rev Paul Roberts  Tony Smith  Jo Beavan  Ian Linton  Lyn Pollard |

Due to the absence of PR, SH Chaired the Meeting as the Lay Vice Chair . Those attending were welcomed and the Meeting was opened with prayer from Rev. Natalie Jennings. All in attendance agreed for SR to record the meeting to aid the Minute taking.

Apologies for absence were received from PR, TS, JB, LP and IL.

Notes were handed out regarding the following:

* Briefing from Rod Minchin regarding recent flood and update on current mitigation activity. Also briefing on Ash Tree removal
* Final figures for Phase 2 nd 3 Building works and clock refurbishmentform
* SH Insurance update
* Registering of Inclusive Church from Rev. Natalie Jennings

**Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting (5th January 2023) had been circulated and it was agreed that they could be signed as a correct record. Proposed by VM and seconded by NJ and approved

It was agreed that items 5 & 9 on the Agenda should be dealt with together.

**Matters Arising**

**Statue/Bench**

There is currently no update on the purchase of a statue for the Church. VM commented that a number of good Garden Centres (ie Three Shires, Newent) had some stone statues available for sale.

The sum of £1000 has been offered with the suggestion of a bench being purchased with the funds. It has already been commented upon that there are already a number of existing benches around the churchyard and alternative suggestions could be considered with the needs of the Church in mind. Examples could include trees/bulbs/wild flower seeds/birdboxes/noticeboards. A plaque in the bell ringing area was put forward by KC. It was agreed to defer the decision to another time, with idea input to also come from the Project and Fabric Committee.

**Finance Report**

MM agreed to send sincere thanks to Bob Clarke for his much appreciated contribution to the PCC as Treasurer by way of a card and a bottle of wine.

SH informed the meeting that a Lottery Promoter is required by March. The Annual Fee of £20 should be paid and it was suggested that the Admin Angels take on the role of organising this. SH has some notes acquired regarding Lottery Promoters.

**The Appointment of PCC Treasurer and Independent Examiner**

SH proposed the appointment of Lyn Pollard as PCC Treasurer which was seconded by KC.

SH proposed the appointment of Sharon Collin (Saffrons Cross Garage) as Independent Examiner. Sharon is willing to take on the role for one year initially commencing at the beginning of April 2023. NJ seconded the proposal. Both appointments were approved.

The appointment of LP, MM and KC as three signatories was proposed by SR with any two out of the three to sign cheques on behalf of the PCC. Bob Clarke will cease to be a signatory. Seconded by NJ. This was approved.

SH mentioned that there had already been a number of meetings with Lyn Pollard, Rosemary Lording (Deanary Treasurer) and Gordon Powell who would be offering mentoring and support including training in the new Finance Software. SH expressed her thanks to KC for putting the PCC in touch with Gordon Powell who has been extremely helpful and supportive. Similarly thanks to Rosemary Lording for her input. Sharman Wagstaff had agreed to assist with Finance Support which will provide back up for LP as and when required.

Gordon Powell was preparing the end of year 2022 accounts which will need to be approved 28 days before the APCM on the 17th May.

**Overview of Accounts**:

SH reported that in very general terms the regular Income and Expenditure in 2022 were at break even however there will likely be a net deficit of £22,000 reflecting spend on building work and clock.

Finances have been boosted by income from Flood Concerts, Lighting of the Tower and Village Fete but for the future negative considerations/extra expense to be taken into account included higher energy costs and the purchase of software support packages and general increase in all costs. There is also the possibility of the loss of or reduction in the grant to the Churchyard mintenance from the Parish Council which is, as yet, not clear. MM suggested writing a letter to the Parish Council in April to politely enquire.

Payment to Rod Minchin for the Puddle Pump is still required.

An increase in insurance costs is also a possiblity.

Another future cost of approx £1,000 to be taken into consideration is the need to repair ground level stonework on the south side of the church previously ‘patched’. The patching, which was done as an intermediary measure but did not work and will need to be properly repaired. The removal of the Ash tree would incur additional expenses as would the acquisition of the puddle pump for flood resilience work.

SH mentioned that the Project Group were working on having a better programme of regular maintenance arrangements. For instance: Servicing the Clock, Gutter clearance contract (MM conferring with Marden), Fire Extinguishers etc. These could significantly increase spending in the medium term. NJ explained that the Churchwardens at Marden would be sending her a programme and that it should be possible to organise regular works as a combined group in order to keep costs down. The PCC need to consider steps to increase regular income to meet the increasing costs as well as to allow an increase in the Parish Offer.

The Fundraising Committee have agreed to put all monies held in seperate accounts into the main PCC account. Similarly for the Bellringers’ seperate funds. The PCC would need to consider and agree the status of the these funds for accounting purposes when the funds tarnsfer.

SH explained the three status options for funds to be labelled as follows:

1. Unrestricted – can be spent without restriction
2. Restricted – relating to restricted and specific spending areas and where money has been expressly raised or given for a purpose and not easily changed
3. Designated – designated relating to a particular potential spending area but can be changed

SH informed the meeting that an Energy grant of £3,320 had been received from the Diocese in December and advice from Gordon Powell was that this money should be ‘Designated’ to offset against energy bills in 2023 when they come in.

SH proposed the designation of this grant of £3,320 for 2023 to be offset against 2023 bills which was seconded by KC and approved.

VM commented that heating the church must be a top priority investment due to the fact that many Church attendees have suffered ill health due to the cold conditions. More efficient ways of heating the church should be considered, for eg; underfloor heating and heating in the kitchen as well as the WC.

SH informed the meeting that Gordon Powell has identified two Trust Funds invested in income shares, details of which she shared with the meeting.

The first being £51 bequeathed by the late Prebendary F W Worsey “for the maintenance of the Churchyard”.

The second being the sum of £500 bequeathed by Mr W Houlbrook to be used “for the maintenance of the church and churchyard” as long as family graves were kept in order.

It was agreed that the graveyards of the above family be located if possible (Sharman Wagstaff on the AA Group could possibly search for these) and enquiry made about possible contact with the Houlbrook family.

SH proposed that subject to the above, steps should be taken for the Trusts to be wound up to obtain the monies and then the PCC can decide to either designate or restrict the funds accordingly. This was seconded by SR and and approved.

Finally with regards to finances, KC raised the question of who is doing the Gift Aid (over £2000 recovered in 2022) and it was thought that LP will most likely undertake this role.

The finance discussion ended.

**Mission and Worship**

In the absence of PR, NJ reported on the success of Wild Church and Forest Church with the Brace family supporting the work in these areas which is greatly appreciated.

Evening Prayer/ Evensong, to continue as usual with attendees taking seats in the choirstalls and enjoying a contemplative and quiet service. This will take place at 6pm during the summer months and 4pm during the winter months.

News across the Benefice included more families attending events with lots of links building up such as Guiding and Brownies.

**Intergenerational Mission Project**: It was decided to defer making any financial decisions for the time being pending review of the 2022 accounts , but general support is needed.

SH commented that an inspirational film previously shown at the APCM last year at Sutton (or an updated version) could be made available in order to increase awareness of the project and to drum up support for the Project and encourage others to get involved. NJ agreed to get this sent over so it could be shown during a future service (instead of a sermon). 26th March was mentioned as a possible date for this with Coffee to be provided after the service. The profile could be raised in advance by means of a Fundraising Event and posting information on the Website.

NJ explained how the three parishes of Sutton, Lugwardine and Withington need to pay £10,000 between them, each needing to raise £3,333. Both Lugwardine and Withington have either funds available or have obtained grant funding but Sutton have no reserves left and need assistance to raise the funds. Preston Wynne have agreed to donate £200 and Marden have agreed to donate £1000 with a possible grant being avaialable of £1000. Bodenham to consider a contribution as soon as possible and agree a figure so that Sutton would have some sort of idea soon as to how much they had left to find. KC suggested a ball park figure of £500.

**Project and Fabric Committee**

SH invited the meeting to review the figures regarding Phase 2 and 3 Building Works and Refurbishment of the Clock to date, which summarised what was spent during the last year.

Total payments come to £37,824.80 (excluding VAT) on the Project with another £800 to pay at the end of the 12 months retention period.

Emergency spending amounted to £512 including Architects’ fees.

Income came to a total of £16,159 which included Lasletts Charities, HHCT and Benefact Trust plus some individual donations. The above figures did not include VAT which was being reclaimed. Approximately £7,000 has been reclaimed and approval and payment is awaited.

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All expressed their sincere thanks to SH for all her hard work.

SH reported the resignation from the PFC of John Treays. Mike Wingfield had joined the PFC and offered much practical expertise and help and has some equipment that will aid work to be done. The magnificent work by Richard Collins and his team in ditch cleaning and general clearing is much appreciated, has made a huge difference and has resulted in the revealing of some beautiful snowdrops. Thanks also to Tim Brierley, Glynn Jones, Martin Hunt, Sue and Godfrey Hack and Jeff Pollard and, of course, Richard and Karilyn Collins. The work is ongoing.

MM strongly advised that the sandbags should not be moved other than by a group of helpers (not just one person) before Frank Hulme’s funeral on Thursday 23rd February.

SH invited the Meeting to look at the Briefing provided by Rod Minchin on recent flooding and the Ash Tree removal. The PCC wished to express their thanks to Rod for all his hard work and for arranging the Puddle Pump which was extremely effective in dealing with the flood water.

Everyone present agreed that the decision by Herefordshire Council to agree to the removal of the diseased (and dangerous) Ash tree was very much welcomed, particularly after all the very time consuming and challenging aspects of the rules and regulations involved in getting this permission. Tim Brierley and Mike Wingfield will chop up the tree and it has been agreed that donations for firewood can be given by anyone wishing to obtain wood and will help to cover costs.

SH informed the meeting that the PFC continued to meet regularly and the next meeting was scheduled for April when the detailed recommendations from the Quinquennial report will be looked at along with proposals for some internal work including refurbishment of the funeral bier – (NJ still waiting to hear back). It may be possible to make insurance claims on leaning/dangerous grave stones needing work.

Long term items to discuss are the re-ordering to include the replacement Kitchen, toilet, lighting Heating/Floor etc and community facilities. To progress with a re-ordering project a Statement of Significance (Historical importance/aspect of the church) and Needs (needs and requirements going forward) is required and work needs to start on this. Thanks to Margaret Andrews for her fantastic research and other work on the the historical records and information. This will support the work on the Statement of Signifiance and Needs.

It was hoped that the Diocesan Advisory Committee can be invited to come to the Church to consider our ideas and proposals and advise on what can be done. NJ reported that generally they are very supportive in helping the Church.

**Insurance Update**

SH circulated a report for everyone to read at leisure. SH reported that volunteers over the age of 80 should be aware that there are no personal accident benefit payments allowed, but they are fully insured. She also brought it to the meeting’s attention that money in transit is covered up to £5,000 but anything more than £3000 has special rules applicable. Large sums of money should not be transported or held at home. There is £10 Million Public Liability cover.

**Admin Angels**

SR reported that she and MM had met at the end of January and had a very useful discussion about Margaret’s list of duties and what they entail. Documents have been produced to help the person who banks monies and those who help with event organising (weddings and funerals in particular). A list of duties these jobs entail will be positioned within the Church (Vestry and Kitchen) to help others understand the duties involved. It was agreed that Linda Teece and Julia Smith should be included in AA correspondence and, if possible, on the Whatsapp Group which has so far been very helpful in keeping everyone informed and in touch. Important job to do for the website is the Who’s Who page which will need some organisation.

**Fundraising**

MM reported that a recent meeting had been held to discuss upcoming Events.

1. Garden Tea Party on Saturday August 5th at 2pm with Cream Teas/Pimms/Prosecco (Church Marquee)
2. Salmon Lunch on Sunday 3rd September (Church Marquee)
3. Patronal Quiz on Friday September 29th (Michaelmas) at Village Hall
4. Christmas Bazaar on the 2nd December
5. Village Summer Fete to be held on Saturday 22nd July at the Village Hall.

Glynn Jones is organising and very supportive of the Church involvement in the Village fete. Advertisement of where the funds will be allocated are known up front and include the flood resilience work at the church but Glynn is looking for support with the Cake Stall/organisation, so everyone was encouraged to think about someone who may be able to help with this.

SR agreed to add these events into the Church Calendar which is now displayed on the Website, along with further information on the Events page.

**Churchyard**

MM reported that mowing costs were £150 per cut last year and that costs are likely to increase. The grant given by the Parish Council was normally attributed to these costs but thought to be doubtful this year in the light of the grant being in question this year. MM will contact Richard Morgan to discuss further and the mower of Marden churchyard may be asked to submit a quote. It was generally agreed by all that parts of the churchyard should be left to naturalise and wild flowers encouraged to grow, only mowing paths to make the graves accessible, all the while ensuring that this does not upset anyone or make it difficult to walk around. The grave areas need to be kept short and cared for and the front area of the Church. This will provide an opportunity to widening the ‘wild’ area and encourage insects and butterflies as well as wild flowers which grow naturally in the area. MM agreed to arrange a Churchyard meeting with Richard Morgan and aims to strike a balance that will keep all happy. Rod Minchin and Richard and Karilyn Collins to be involved in the disussion as to areas to be mowed etc

**Deanary Update**

VM is Deanary Synod and had no update to report.

NJ reported that Wigmore Abbey has been closed for regular worship. It was hoped that there would be a appointment soon to allow re-opening.

**Correspondence** – Nil

**Safeguarding** – DBS are online.

**Any other business**

1. SR reported on JB’s behalf that Amazon Smile is discontinuing. Also JB asked that consideration be given to helping the victims of the Earthquake in Turkey/New Zealand. SH suggestd that a general collection from this coming Sunday’s Service for two weeks towards the Disaster Emergency Fund. JB also asked that dates for the Pop Up Bar (Café?) should be included on the Website Church Calendar as well as PCC meetings. SR said she would need these dates forwarded in advance.
2. NJ reported on her involvement in Inclusive Church and brought attention to the notes distrubted. She explained this came about after a very recent meeting of Churchwardens. By becoming involved in Inclusive Church, the Church would need to formally agree to the IC Statement and give a donation (annually recommended £5 or above). The aim is to ‘signpost’ churches that are registered and to welcome and serve all people regardless of ability, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, economic power. It was agreed overall that our Church is already inclusive and that our Vision and Mission statement expressly declares this. There was a very positive disussion and it was agreed that further discussion regarding this is needed but this should be deferred until such a time as more PCC members are present in order to have a full and fair discussion and exchange of views.
3. NJ also reported that on Thursday 23rd February Ruth and Donald Rogers will be hosting a Cheese and Wine party at their home for those interested in helping with the Knitted Bible Exhibition. Tea and Coffee will also be provided and it is hoped to raise some funds on the evening to cover the costs of setting up the Exhibition.
4. KC reported that the Social Justice Group had met recently and arranged for a return visit of the Palestinian Speaker on the 23rd March at the Village Hall. A Palestinian Supper will be offered as well as a stall selling Palestinian goods. KC agreed to let SR have further details for website advertising.
5. SH reported that there was approximately £55 left (after expenses) from the Hospitality Table in the Church during the tower lighting period and it had been well used. It is hoped that with the improvement of a designated area within the Church, that a more permaenent table can be established, with the help of other people to maintian it, and provide and maintain refreshment supplies.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9pm,.

**Date of next meeting: Thursday 13th April 2023 in the CHURCH.**