

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
PARISH OF PATCHAM (ALL SAINTS)
with The Ascension Westdene
Sunday 23rd May 2021 at 14.00 – Ascension Westdene

VESTRY MEETING
1. Welcome and prayer
AF welcomed attendees to the joint APCM: those attending in person at the Ascension (14) & those joining from home via Zoom (13).
2. Apologies
Apologies were sent from Sue England, Helen Shires for the second part of the meeting and Olive and Keith Ridge.
3. Minutes of the meeting of the 18th October 2020
The minutes of the meeting held on the 18 th October were agreed and signed off by AF.
4. Notice of nominations and election of two churchwardens
Jody Sharp is the current churchwarden at Ascension. Patrick Harrex is standing down after three years as churchwarden at All Saints. There is no successor as yet. There is a path to follow in these circumstances and AF is talking to the Archdeacon about it. AF encouraged everyone to keep praying for a successor.
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
1. Minutes of the APCM of the 18th October 2020
The minutes were approved and signed off by AF.
2. Annual Parish report
2.1 Treasurer's report and presentation of the accounts for approval
A summary of the accounts was circulated with the meeting papers and there was general agreement from those present. The accounts have already been signed off by the independent examiner.
In 2019/20 we received some money through the Deanery and Credit for Mission scheme for Caz's role in setting up mission outreach in Hollingbury. This has now ceased and so we cannot make an application this year. Although the Diocese finances are not as bad as were feared, we have taken quite a hit in finances. This is partly due to lack of hall hire fees during the last year although some have started to come back.
2.2 Electoral roll report
Five people have come off the electoral roll who are sadly deceased. The total is 157 (122 at All Saints and 35 at the Ascension). Pat Bartlett has been managing the roll for several years and is now standing down. AF thanked Pat for all her hard work on it. Sharon Springham has taken over the role of PCC secretary and will also be taking on the electoral roll work.
2.3 Secretary's report
AF reported that the PCC met 4 times during the last year – twice before lockdown and twice on Zoom. There were no other comments on the annual report.
2.4 Report on Fabric, Ornaments and Buildings
The following updates were given:
Patrick Harrex reported that there will be scaffolding going up on the church again. This is to replace some slates that have fallen off the tower. He also reported that there will be some new signage soon which was paid for by the Friends who AF thanked.
AF reported that the broken screen at All Saints has been replaced but now the projector has stopped working and has gone to be repaired. AF also said that the lighting on the nave wall needs to be improved as the wall is no longer flat there following the renovation work.

Jan Steele said she was thrilled about the work being carried out in the graveyard but asked about the removal of the flint wall. We had been assured by the council that the wall would be rebuilt although the flint seems to have gone. AF has contacted the chancellor of the Diocese who said that the work must stop until a confirmatory faculty has been obtained. This is with the council now.

Caroline Thomas asked about the kitchen situation in the church as this has been talked about previously. The discussion had been about adding another fire door in the north aisle to accommodate fire regulations and, in addition, accessible toilets and a tea bar could be added. These are still on the agenda at some point and may be funded out of our assets - a ball park cost was around £75,000.

Fran Ward made the point that we need a renewed drive for giving. We shouldn't be relying on assets to sustain daily running costs as they should be used for improvement projects. The Diocese recommends that 5% of income is given to the church and another 5% on other good causes. We are getting towards that but are not there yet. Legacy money is being used to repair the rotten doorway at the Ascension.

Pat Bartlett asked about the organ at All Saints. It was looked at after the refurbishment but the contractor will be back to service it again before it is used. It is currently covered over to prevent dust.

2.5 Report on the meetings of the Deanery Synod

There were no comments/questions on the report that had been circulated for the meeting.

3. Appointment of the PCC

3.1 Ex-officio members

Clergy licensed to the parish: Revds Andy Flowerday and Caz Dunk

Reader: Kim Hill

Churchwardens: Jody Sharp

Diocesan Synod members: Revd Andy Flowerday

Deanery Synod members: Carole Copelin and Liz Dwiar. There are two vacancies for this. Fran Ward put himself forward and was duly elected.

3.2 PCC elected members

12 in total - 9 at All Saints and 3 at the Ascension.

Tanya, Roger and Linda have all completed 3 years and are standing again. Additional nominations were received from Matthew Willetts and Caroline Thomas. All five were duly elected.

3.3 Approval of sides people

The list of sides people was circulated with the paperwork for the meeting. Geraldene Newman (All Saints) and Bev McArdle (Ascension) need to be added to it. Everyone was approved. Additional people can be added at a later date if necessary and the PCC would be informed of that.

4. Appointment of Parish Independent examiner

Gilbody were re-appointed as the independent examiner.

5. Appointment of Parish Safeguarding Officers

AF thanked Tanya who stood down as Safeguarding Officer last October and Marian who has covered the position at All Saints in the interim. Caroline Thomas was appointed as the new Safeguarding Officer for All Saints. New safeguarding leadership training came in last September. AF completes this every three years although church wardens no longer need to do the top level training.

AF reported that David Gutsell has decided to retire and expressed thanks and gratitude for the occasions David has stepped in at the church. Dorothy Cook commented that his help has been much appreciated and Liz Dwiar seconded that.

6. Presentation - Caz

Caz gave a brief review of the challenge of the pandemic over the last year saying that it is possible to overlook the good stuff that God has brought our way.

The Alpha course ended abruptly in 2020 when the pandemic started although it was run again on Zoom this year. It is clear that it was encouraging and enjoyable and attendees grew in faith and confidence in making new friends.

The alternative 'Messy Christmas in a Bag' had an overwhelming response of 200 bags. Caz expressed gratitude for everyone's help with those. Going forward, it is hoped that we can welcome families in person at the Tiny Tots group on Wednesdays.

During COVID, the Ascension friendship group collaborated with the Westdene Barn friendship group in delivering thermal boxes of hot meals to grateful residents.

The Brighton Cauldron food bank needed alternative space for storage and they have been using the Michael Young room for their hub. They have now moved to new premises and thanked the Ascension for its help.

The local nursery in Westdene contacted the church about food donations and, as a result, small groups of children visited at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and to celebrate the life of Captain Tom. It has been an opportunity for All Saints and Ascension to worship together and to get to know people we wouldn't normally see.

Caz concluded that there has been much to be thankful for over the past year and we can expect more good stuff from God as we share together.

7. Chair's address

AF started by reading some scripture from John 14.

Pentecost is a time when God sent his helper/advocate to the disciples as a comforter and constant presence.

This has been a bruising year for everyone – mourning loved ones, loss of work, deprivation and so on - but Jesus' promise is still there – he won't leave us comfortless.

AF thanked the following for their work over what has been a hard year:

– the church wardens Jody and Patrick. They have both been very supportive especially with constant government changes with COVID as well as updating the church policies and procedures.

AF asked that we continue to pray for the vacant church warden posts.

- Linda and Olive for administering hall bookings/risk assessments to ensure the correct procedures are in place.
- Fran and David for their work on the finances.
- Roger and the fabric committee, the PCC and the focus group for the correct running of all things ecclesiastical.
- Bernard who is standing down as the PCC Secretary and Sharon who is taking over the role.
- Bob Hill for his technical support and Sue Taylor for the music.
- All those who have helped with numerous jobs like cleaning, cooking, distributing and so on.

AF continued by saying that the pandemic has illustrated that nothing is for certain in worldly terms and followed this with Psalm 13 - a lament and hard felt cry to God. It is important to acknowledge what we have lost but we can cry out to God like the Psalmist. God looks on us with goodness in his heart and is our rock.

As we rebuild the new 'normal' we look forward to learning from what has happened and new ways of carrying out our mission. To this end, the PCC has set up three small groups to look at the Mission Action Plan across the Parish. This will focus on the needs of the Parish rather than the finances - although our finances do need to improve and we will be doing a push on that this year. A questionnaire went out with the weekly newsletter which will contribute to the plan so please complete that if not already done so. And be honest in your answers! An online presence has come out of the pandemic as some things are better or equally good online. However, we need to make sure we don't leave behind those with no access to online facilities.

We want to keep the positives of working together and COVID has shown that we can do that – joint services, shared talks, etc. We do need to step up our work with children so please continue to pray for that.

In the coming months, we will be looking at stewardship and following Nehemiah in the Old Testament. He rebuilt the city walls and we can gain inspiration from him as we move out of the pandemic.

AF ended by reading out Hebrews 10.

Dorothy Cook thanked Andy, Caz, Kim, Francis and the church wardens for their leadership and support over these challenging times.

Jan Steele asked if the survey of questions will be available to those who don't have IT facilities. Yes they have been given the survey. Jan also asked about the cleaning in the church as the cleaning group has diminished. T,AF confirmed that the professional cleaners who clean the centre will also be cleaning the church.

8. Closing prayer

Caz read out the opening verses of Psalm 133. God's spirit unites us together with a common love for one another. The meeting ended by sharing the Grace together.