

Minutes of the Meeting of St. James P.C.C.

Monday 10th May 2021

The meeting was held on Zoom due to Covid-19 restrictions

Present: Rob Powell, Johan Allen, Nick Burt, Liz Gibbons, Adam Seymour-Davies, Marcia Gordon, Ailie Neill, Alan Burrows, Lisa Burrows, Jacqueline Gray, John Talbot, Glynis Wilkinson, John Farebrother, Stephanie Sulaiman, Millie Miller, Frances Christian.

1. **Welcome:** Rob welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. **Apologies:** Noah Reddie.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

The minutes of the meeting from Monday 15th March 2021 were approved unanimously.

4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

Item 5 c) Rob reported that it had been agreed with the Diocese that we launch the Parish Giving Scheme in early 2022 to coincide with Rob's annual finance letter to the church family. The Diocese suggested a 'soft launch' with PCC members only in the Autumn this year as a trial run. Rob also reported that we will be taking part in a Deanery trial for contactless giving and Rob, Alan & Olivia will receive appropriate training later this month.

5. **Finance Report:**

a) Management Accounts:

Alan presented the management accounts as at the end of April 2021. Total Income was £2,468 under budget and Total Expenditure was £10,382 under budget giving a variance of £7,915. The PCC was once again encouraged and grateful for the sustained and generous giving of the church family throughout the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Rob thanked Alan for his continued hard work with the finances.

b) End of Year Accounts 2020

Alan presented the end of year accounts which had been independently examined and a letter from the auditor stating that no irregularities had been found. Alan proposed approving the accounts with John Talbot seconding and the proposal was passed unanimously. The accounts will be presented for adoption to the APCM on 24th May.

6. **Buildings**

a) Quinquennial Inspection Job List

Rob gave an update on the job schedule and reported that we continue to make progress with the various items.

b) Building for the Kingdom

Arrangements for the PCC Engagement Day on Saturday 15th May were reviewed and members were encouraged to attend.

Pause for Prayer

7. **Vocations to Ministry:**

Rob reported that three members of St James are currently in the diocesan system exploring vocation to ministry. Jacqueline Gray and Judy Douglas are both exploring ordination whilst Alan Burrows is looking at SPA ministry with a special interest in hospital chaplaincy. Members were encouraged to keep all three in prayer in the coming months.

8. **Living in Love & Faith Deanery Course:**

Rob reported that, since our decision to run the LLF 5-week course as the best way to engage with this material, plans have been put in place to run the course on a Deanery basis. This could lift some of the

pressure from individual parishes and provide a welcome opportunity for church members to engage in discussion with people from a variety of churches and opinions. Concern was expressed that the course be led/facilitated well and that all opinions/views be fairly aired and represented. Rob agreed to feed that back to the Area Dean. Members agreed that we should join in with the Deanery course rather than run our own.

9. Interim Children's Worker Contract: [NOTE: Rob Powell declared a conflict of interest & left the meeting]

Johan outlined his rationale for retaining the services of Bethany Powell for a further year as our Interim Children's Worker. This was followed by a brief report to PCC on our Eastertide children's work and its successful implementation. Johan then proposed that we should extend Bethany's contract for a further year from 31st July 2021 to 31st July 2022 under the same contractual conditions. This would include employment for up to 24 hours per week and payment at the current rate of the London Living Wage. After some discussion, including with regard to possible and appropriate amendment to the job title, which Johan agreed should be considered, this proposal was accepted and passed unanimously by PCC.

10. Roadmap to Freedom Update [Rob Powell returned to the meeting at this point]

Rob reminded members of the roadmap for resuming normal activities at St James and reported that we were on track for a full resumption of all services & activities by September at the latest, though some steps may be able to be taken before then depending on the success of the government's roadmap.

Thought is being given to upgrading the church AV system to allow us to livestream services for the long term, even beyond the resumption of normal services. It was agreed that this would be beneficial.

PracticalAV, the company that undertook our most recent AV upgrade in the last couple of years, have given a quote of £1782.47 to upgrade our system to livestream. The quote was proposed for approval by Peter Neill and seconded by Liz Gibbons and was carried unanimously.

11. St Paul's Appointment Proposal

Rob reported that the process to appoint a new minister at St Paul's has been underway for some time. One candidate was interviewed following the advertising period. The panel comprised the Archdeacon, Rob, Rev Marc Richeux (St Alban's), representatives from CPAS and Church Society (Patrons), and two parish reps from St Paul's. The panel wished to explore things further with the candidate who then had a formal interview with the Bishop of Kingston. He expressed his confidence in the candidate and his wish to appoint, as did the Bishop of Southwark. The candidate then had a less formal conversation with Rob and the two reps from St Paul's. Due to a legal technicality the candidate would be unable to be appointed as Team Vicar, but rather as House for Duty Associate Vicar to the Team Ministry with special responsibility for the parish of St Paul's. This requires each of the 3 PCCs in the Team to give their majority approval. After a brief discussion Rob proposed approving the appointment of the candidate as House for Duty Associate Vicar to the Team Ministry with special responsibility for the parish of St Paul's. The proposal was carried unanimously.

12. Racism in the Church of England

Rob gave a brief introduction to two reports recently published on this critical issue, namely The Southwark Diocese Anti-Racism Charter and 'From Lament to Action', a report from the Archbishop's Anti-Racism Taskforce.

He explained that the murder of George Floyd in 2020 woke many people up across the world to the ongoing sin of racism, including here in the UK & the C of E wasn't immune from that awakening. In Feb 2020, pre-George Floyd's death, during the Windrush General Synod debate the Archbishop of Canterbury said: "There is no doubt when we look at our own church that we are still deeply institutionally racist." Rob suggested that anyone who saw the recent Panorama programme on BBC would be hard pressed to disagree with him. The critical question for the PCC is to what extent are we as a church deeply institutionally racist, how can we assess that & having assessed it how can we address it?

Two important documents have been published recently which may help us in this quest.

'From Lament to Action' is the report of the Archbishop's Anti-Racism Taskforce set up last year in the wake of Windrush & Floyd, published on Stephen Lawrence Day 22nd April 2021. The taskforce was mandated by the Bishops implement 'significant cultural and structural change' on issues of racial justice in C of E. It was given a dual remit. First, to review the 161 formal recommendations & myriad informal ones made in the 25

previous C of E reports on racial justice published over the last 36 years; identify any that haven't been implemented & propose those which could be implemented now swiftly taking account of the need to update some of them after so many years have passed. Second, to advise the Archbishops on the composition & remit of a Racial Justice Commission to be set up after the taskforce has completed its time limited job of producing this report. The report is rooted in biblical theology, making it distinct from other anti-racism movements outside the church. It identifies 5 key priority areas with associated recommendations with clear timelines and accountability systems: Participation (inc. appointments), Education, Training & Mentoring, Young People, Structures & Governance. Beyond that, the taskforce recommends 7 workstreams for the Racial Justice Commission: Theology, Slavery (inc. Monuments), History & Memory, Culture & Liturgy, Complaints Handling, Participation, Patronage. One of the major recommendations in the report is to establish a Racial Justice Directorate in the C of E with Racial Justice Officers appointed in every diocese, to embed the recommendations & the future work of the RJC into the life of every parish/church. So, there is much to look forward to coming down the line to help us as a church family in the task of addressing these issues.

The second important document recently published is the Diocese of Southwark Anti-Racism Charter unanimously approved by Diocesan Synod in March 2021. It is much shorter than the C of E report & is a helpful precursor to the material that will come down the line in the future from the taskforce, the commission and the diocese. It too is rooted in biblical theology, gives some context and expresses a renewed urgency to address issues of racial justice in the diocese because of insufficient progress so far. In recommitting the diocese to be a truly anti-racist organisation the Charter identifies 3 main principles to be embedded in its strategic response to issues of racism, racial inequality, injustice and indifference and then outlines an action plan 'Turning up the Volume'.

A brief discussion followed as members shared a variety of thoughts and comments. This is clearly and important and sensitive area and Rob said he wanted to put it on the agenda for the next few PCC meetings so we could continue the conversation as we await further material and directives from the C of E.

13. APCM

Rob reminded members of the date and arrangements for the APCM on Monday 24th May at 8pm.

14. Safeguarding

There had been no safeguarding incidents to report since the last meeting. The diocese has been in contact to inform us of the need for many of our volunteers, including PCC members, to either undertake safeguarding training (C0 and C1) for the first time or to refresh their previous training. Rob will be in contact with volunteers and PCC members in due course.

15. A.O.B. - none

Future Dates

15th May – PCC consultation on Building for the Kingdom

24th May – APCM

19th July – PCC

13th September – PCC

The meeting concluded at 10.10pm with the Grace.