

PARISH OF HORSHAM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of St Mary's Church Congregation and Council held in the Leslie Room at St Mary's Church on Sunday 17th March 2013 following the 9.30 service

Revd Guy Bridgewater was in the Chair and about 50 Members of the congregation were present.

1. **Opening Prayer**

The meeting opened with prayers led by Rev. Peter Francis.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Rev. Jo Elvidge, Janet Ebdon, Sheila Pilkington, Olive Knight, Sheila and Ron Glaysher, Clive Palmart, Astrid Gale, Lucy Forster and Nicole Stevenson

3. **Minutes of the AGM held on 25th March, 2012**

Subject to an addition to Item 6.4 to read the list of names "were elected", the minutes of the 2012 AGM were approved and signed.

4. **Matters Arising** - None.

5. **Church Council (Mission Action Team) Reports**

The report packs were available to be read on the website. The Chairman led the members through the reports as follows and invited questions from the floor.

5.1 Worshipping & Praying

Following the sad death of Paul Jinks, the chairman asked for continued prayers for Liz and also for the choir. The Chairman expressed his thanks to Jeremy for his report and for the dedication of the choir. Thanks also to Martin Mills and the serving team as well as to the sidespeople noting in particular that Audrey Carver, Janet Ebdon and Coral are retiring from the team.

5.2 Growing as Disciples

The Chairman thanked Fiona for her continued dedicated work with the young families and noted that the DCC would like to be able to increase her paid hours to two days a week if Stewardship pledges allow. Thanks also to Dick for maintaining the Home Groups and to Coral who has helped him in this respect.

5.3 Caring as a Fellowship

Thanks were expressed to Jo, Morag and the rest of the Team including Liz Hawkins who manages the volunteer driving and Kate, Mandy and the social Team who have now retired. It is hope that a new team can be put together following the Time and Talents stewardship. The Prayer Chain works well with 50 people praying regularly. Could put the prayer chain in the "did you know" box in the pew sheet.

5.4 Serving and Transforming the Community

The night Shelter was a very successful venture with excellent cooperation between the Horsham Churches and it will run again next winter although the format may change slightly. Thanks to Denise Herrington who organised and supported the St Mary's team of volunteers.

Horsham Churches together are in need of our prayers for continued funding for the development worker and also for a new moderator to come forward. The Church Centre Bookshop and café is also in need of prayer support as they discern whether or not the venture can continue given that the financial position is in dire straits.

Thanks go to Hennie Sleeman for running successful parenting courses. We are also immensely proud of the nursery school and all it does.

5.5 Proclaiming the Gospel

Work is underway for a mission in 2014 (more later in chairman's comments) and out reach to new housing will be kept under review over the next few years. There are also plans to begin a new Alpha

course on 15th April. Thanks are due to the team of Baptism visitors who are doing an excellent job in this growing ministry and to Nigel Stalley for his work with the youth at TGIF.

We give thanks to Tim Herrington and his team of Stewards who keep the church open and assure Tim of our prayers.

5.6 Buildings & Fabric

We are still awaiting final costs following the Quinquennial inspection and there are additional costs in respect of the falling masonry where the nave meets the tower at the back of church. Scaffolding was erected for safety reasons and the architect is being contacted. John Ebdon is assisting with the project and would ideally like to see the work done in early summer although this may not be possible if a faculty is required. The Friends of St Mary's are awaiting the outcome of the quinquennial before assigning any funds they have available.

We are grateful to Jane Gorrie for all she does including her attempts to keep the church as warm as is feasible. A new boiler controller has been installed which allows greater control on running the boiler. However, the nature of the church and the draughts prevent the church from heating to an ideal temperature. Some of this may be alleviated following works from the quinquennial.

Improvements are planned to the sound system and we thanks are due to the person whose donation makes these improvements possible.

5.7 Admin & Finance

Guy expressed his thanks to Alison Carré in the office and to Myra who is handling the Stewardship forms. Myra reported that responses were slow and reflected the difficult financial times. However, there have been a few one off gifts towards the Fabric Fund. A fundraising team will be formed to raise monies needed for the quinquennial.

With regard to finance, it was noted that the church centre and Car Park are a good source of income. Some of the Fabric Fund has been used to make essential repairs and maintenance to the Verger's cottage. In response to questions from the floor, the treasurer confirmed that some restricted funds are now included in the Fabric Fund and the "other Income" section which represents money from weddings and funerals should be maintained at the 2012 level next year. The budget for this item had been lower than the actual result and in future the budget figure would be more in line with the actual result from previous years.

Vince Mitchell asked whether surplus funds from St Mary's were used to support St Leonards and other sister churches. The Treasurer explained that surplus funds go into the Parish funds which then subsidise less well off churches, currently, St Leonards. The Church of England is generally financed on a basis of mutual support.

A member of the congregation noted that there are frequently costs associated with repairs of church property following the departure of clergy. It was suggested that we should keep on top of regular maintenance to minimise this. It was also noted that 18 Queensway is owned by the diocese so St Mary's will not be responsible for any maintenance work needed on this property.

6.0 Adoption of Safeguarding Policy

A short report from Caroline Crook was distributed, the detailed Safeguarding policy along with information on who has undergone Safeguarding training or CRB checks are available in the office. Caroline proposes ensuring that a copy of the policy is available in each location used by children. The congregation agreed that this would be worth doing.

Adoption of the Diocesan safeguarding policy was proposed by Morag Davies, seconded by Carol Stalley and unanimously voted in by members of the congregation present at the AGM. The Chairman thanked Vince Mitchell for raising the following question ahead of the meeting: Vince noted that in the list of Time and Talents, choir was listed with no reference to choir members being CRB'd. He asked whether this was correct. Caroline Crook had responded to the chairman by email ahead of the meeting stating "*Not all choir members are checked, only those going on residential trips with choristers and those directly training them, Mike, Jeremy and Valerie. There are about 8 others who have crb's anyway so there are a Variety of people to help choristers if they have need. The crb checking company will not check choir members or servers or anyone else if children are not involved with them and have been*

withdrawing checks we have applied for if they think there is no need for them.” Natalie Loveless further confirmed that the children had been chaperoned on the recent choir trip to Gloucester by herself and Fiona Prentice, the Children and families worker.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that CRB checks do still need to be done every 5 years and this is kept on top of by Caroline.

7.0 Nominations

7.1 Church Wardens

After being proposed and seconded, the following were elected for a further year: Morag Davies, Janet Palmart and Nigel Stalley.

6.2 Parochial Church Council

Christine Bright was elected to stand for three years having been nominated by Brenda Large and seconded by Peter Francis. Myra Ansell was elected to stand for 2 years having been nominated by Frank King and seconded by Val Burgess.

6.3 Deanery Synod

Keith Bridgeman was elected to stand for 3 years having been nominated by Ros Pollard and seconded by Ruth Reed.

6.4 St. Mary's Church Council

Sheila Pilkington, Jonathan Powell, Pam Dexter, Veronica Kidd, Stephen Benson and Richard Herrington were all elected to the DCC for a period of 1 year.

6.5 Sidesmen

The congregation were happy to approve the list of Sidesmen for election.

6.6 HCT

Brenda Large was elected for a period of 3 years having been nominated by Janet Ebdon and seconded by Elizabeth Briggs.

6.7 Family Support Work

All present were happy for Maureen Muggleton and Sue Lismer to continue to represent St Mary's for FSW. The Chairman suggested that it would be good to have someone come and talk to congregation about FSW again.

7. Chairman's comments

The Vicar remembered, by name, those members of our church family who had died in the last year.

The Vicar distributed the 2013-18 Mission Action Plan and highlighted some elements within it.

There will be a Parish Mission from the 4th to the 25th May 2014 and Lee Abbey will help with the preparation and training for this. Week 1 will mainly comprise of supper parties. It is intended that at the end of the supper party someone will talk about the difference faith makes to them personally. Week two may see a few more supper parties and one or two main events by church. Guy has already spoken to Rupert Toovey who will run an Antiques Road show and link in with the topic of spiritual treasure. The third week will see a larger scale event held at a local venue. Perhaps a Christian stand-up comedian who could be interviewed afterwards. Guest services will run on Sundays and no other events will run over this period.

Reflecting on the potential for about 10,000 new houses in North Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst in addition to the current Wickworth Green development, Guy suggested that outreach to these new areas would be an essential task for the whole Parish and extended Deanery.

Guy thanked both Michael West for his Pastoral work and Alan Meyer who both support the clergy team. He also expressed his gratitude to Peter Francis and to both Jo Elvidge and Natalie Loveless who do not receive a Stipend and give so generously of their time. Thanks were also expressed to Karen Ind who assists with preaching and leading services.

Finally, Guy thanked Jebbs for her continued invaluable support.

8. AOB

Nigel Stalley proposed a vote of thanks, on behalf of everyone, to Guy for his leadership, pastoral care and spiritual guidance as well as extending our thanks to Jebbs.

9. The meeting closed in prayer.