

ST. MARY MAGDALENE, ASHTON ON MERSEY

Annual Vestry Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting in St Mary's Church Hall, Sunday 23rd April 2023

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

1 The meeting opened with a prayer.

2 **Present:** 57 members the vicar, Steve Rankin (chair)

Apologies: Sue Gormley, Alec Brownsmith

3 The summary minutes of Annual Vestry Meeting held on 24th April 2022 were approved.

4 Churchwarden's Report:

Wardens: John Vaughan and Anne Keast.

John Vaughan & Anne Keast presented a summary of the report:

- It was noted that we are blessed with the building we have and the teams of people who help look after it
- Thanks was given to Norman Elston and Alec Brownsmith who continue to help maintain the church and church centre
- Substantial repairs to the roof have taken place
- The Quinquennial Report took place which identified some areas of work required
- Anne Keast will be finishing her time as church warden

Thanks was given to all who serve the church with special thanks to Barbara Shimmings as she steps down as deputy warden Steve thanks Anne, on behalf of the PCC, for her time serving as church warden

5 Election of Churchwardens:

There were two nominations – John Vaughan and Yorke Menzies. They were duly elected.

Proposer: Jeremy Barnes, Seconder: Avtar Diggwa. All in favour no abstentions.

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Present: 57 members and the vicar, Steve Rankin (chair).

Apologies: Sue Gormley, Alec Brownsmith

1 The Summary Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 24th April 2023 were accepted and approved.

2 Summary of the Annual Report 2022

Steve encouraged all to read the various reports on all that is happening across the church

3 Ministry Updates:

Alex Stewart, Youth Worker

- The vision at the start of the year was to bring the youth and the wider church together more
- Fuel Fridays has continued to build on relationships with young people
- Fuel Sundays has been developing foundations for faith. Alex noted that the foundations already built in Junior Church have allowed the young people to go deeper in faith
- Cross-Roads have used resources by The Bible Society to bring context and greater understanding to the Bible
- The youth have also taken part in some social action projects, engaging with what the wider church has been doing
- Thanks was given to those who have served on the team
- Plans for the coming year include more social action, fundraising for missional work, and some activities over the Summer to keep young people engaged during the long break

Carol Dodgson, Community Engagement Officer for Sale West Community Urban Trust

Update given via video

- There are several groups now running that support those most isolated and on the margins of society. Work includes weekly creative groups, a weekly bereavement support group, a men's mental health support group, 1-to-1 support through mentoring, and holiday activities for families.
- The work is supported by many Christian volunteers. Thanks was given to those who give their love and support to the community
- Connections have been developed with local partners and agencies. These have resulted in referrals being made to the groups and also mean that people can be signposted to other agencies for additional support

- Since January 2022 there have been around 400 people engaged with the services provided, with around 50% of those being from Sale West. 98% said they have made friends, 88% feel more connected with the community, 76% feel more self-confident, 75% feel less isolated

4 **2022 Accounts:**

Brian Macfaden presented the summary accounts.

The accounts were approved. Proposer: Rosemary Sigee, Seconder: Dave Atkinson. All in favour no abstentions

The financial overview included:

- The general fund, which includes all church and church centre activities, finished 2022 with a deficit of £11,000
- Over the year a number of large maintenance jobs were completed
- Butterflies finished the year with a deficit of £4000. Their funds vary year on year depending on the children and sessions booked. 2022 was a particularly challenging year due to staff sickness, staff transition, OFSTED inspections, and a significant reduction in children in September due to many starting school. To assist Butterflies through this, the Glebelands Trust made a grant of £40,000 to Butterflies. Butterflies is now full again and finances look very positive
- Regular giving increased by £12,000 last year and cash collections have doubled. Church centre lettings are increasing although they haven't reached pre-covid levels yet.
- We are now seeing a reverse in the declining trend previously seen in our giving.
- A tenth of our income goes to missions here and abroad. In 2022 we gave £28,000 to missions and £7000 to SWCUT
- 2023 budget forecasts a £26,000 deficit and expects that we will drop below our three months of reserves unless income increases
- Everyone was asked to consider reviewing their giving
- The PCC are confident in God's ability to provide for what he wants us to do but also recognise that financial breakthrough is needed this year
- Our accounts are all available online (www.stmarysaom.org/financialreports)

Thanks was given on behalf of the PCC for those who give faithfully and generously.

Steve thanked Brian and Insook Snudden for their work on our finances throughout the year.

5 **Electoral Roll Report**

There are 413 names on the Electoral Roll. This is down from 431 last year, mainly due to people moving away or passing away

6 **Elections:**

- **Deanery Synod** We have 6 places available on the Deanery Synod for a 3-year term. 6 nominations were submitted and the following were duly elected:

Dave Atkinson, Avtar Diggwa, Matthew Kay, Jeff McBurney, Rosemary Sigee, Ian Thwaites

Proposer: Jeremy Barnes, Seconder: Graham Fosh. All in favour, no abstentions.

- **Parochial Church Council:** We have 15 places available for the PCC 2023/24, for a 1-year term. 12 names were submitted and the following were duly elected to serve on the PCC:

Jeremy Barnes, Janet Darlow, Graham Fosh, Joan Heys, Lorna Hitchen, Frances Hyde, Helen Jarvis, Elaine Jones, Brian Macfaden, Barbara Shimmings, Claire Nathan, Rotimi Bajela

Proposer: Ian Thwaites, Seconder: Brian Macfaden. All in favour, no abstentions.

- **Independent Examiner** It is a requirement that we have an Independent Examiner, Sue Suchoparek is willing to re-stand and this was approved.

Proposer: Graham Fosh, Seconder: Matthew Kay. All in favour, no abstentions.

- **Ex-Officio Members**

As point of information, we also have the following ex-officio members:

Readers – Brian Macfaden, Outi Rankin

Pastoral Workers – Gill Hart, Mags Holt, Karen MacMillan, Ann McBurney

7 **Deanery Synod Report**

Rosemary Sigee presented the report

- The Rural Dean for Bowdon Deanery changed, with Clair Jacquiss being succeeded by Andrew Knight

- **May 2022:** Revd. Beverley Jameson, Diocese Ecumenical Officer, gave the address. Her role is to encourage increased awareness among churches and deaneries and the importance of talking and praying together. Andrew Knight submitted a report on 'Everyday Faith Across The Diocese'. Sessions will be held across the diocese to develop the scheme.
- **October 2022:** Timothy Hupfield, Diocesan Healing Advisor, gave an address on healing ministry. Awareness and pastoral care are vital and courses and training will be produced. There was a report from the July General Synod which looked at a route map to Net Zero Carbon, age checks for pornography, the war in Ukraine, assisted suicide, funding for low income communities, clergy discipline, and removing barriers to church for disabled people
- **January 2023:** Bishop Sam Corley encouraged churches to consider and recognise what power or influence they may have and how best to use it. The new chair, Esme Hammer, reported from the Diocesan Synod. Parishes are being encouraged to use the C of E Energy Footprint Tool to submit energy consumption and carbon consumption by the end of July. Parishes are also being encouraged to register as an eco church. Andrew Knight gave his report mentioning the Diocesan Vision & Strategy "Casting the Net". He also reminded churches that all PCC members and those working with children and young people to undertake two online training modules. The work of St Mary's and Sale West was also shared, with mention of how we partner with St Martin's through the Healing Hearts bereavement ministry and the sharing of a youth worker

8 Ministry Updates

Nathan Gregory, Church Plant Associate Vicar

- Highlighted to the wealth of people's willingness to get involved in church life and ministry
- It was noted that there is a very positive environment within the PCC
- A particular highlight was the Baptism service at St Alban's with adults and children giving testimony to Jesus in their life
- The 'I Am Mark' event had a fantastic number of guests that came along. It was good that people took up the challenge to be invitational and seeing the impact the event has had on people has been encouraging
- Looking ahead and within the church planting role, there are conversations taking place but there is nothing of shape just yet to be reported
- Nathan finished by invited us to "turn up the heat" on how we share faith with others

Julie Loynd, Children's Pastor

- Caterpillars toddler group is very popular, even with using the Willow Room to extend the space sessions are now at full capacity most weeks
- Lots of schools work has been taking place with regular visits to, and from, St Mary's School. Julie also works with Forest Park Prep at key times of the year. Nathan has led workshops in Firs Road School and was invited into Wellfield School
- Junior Church has an average attendance of 48 children, some weeks seeing up to 60, with new families every month
- Tiddlers (ages 0-4) is also a very vibrant group with lots of families
- The Light Party was back in person for the first time since the pandemic and was the best attended yet! As well as church families attending, families from schools, Caterpillars, and the wider community came along
- Families from Caterpillars and Healing Hearts attended the family event on Good Friday
- Thanks was expressed to all who pray, support, and encourage the work

Steve Rankin, Vicar

- Steve shared a church member's testimony which included connecting via Festival Manchester, follow-up conversations with the staff team, attending Faith Matters, being baptised and now wanting to share her faith with family members.
- The story highlights how many different people and ministries can be involved in a person's journey to faith

7 Future Plans

Steve gave an update on the coming year:

- **Ministry Events:** a team have been putting on events throughout the last year for four key groups of people: First Encounter (those new to faith), Families, Faith in the Workplace, Spiritually Mature. We hope to develop these further.
- **Wider C of E discussions:** an update was given on the General Synod decision to introduce prayers for same-sex attracted couples. Prayers are now being written which will then be brought back to the Synod in July for further discussion. The General Synod affirmed the traditional doctrine of marriage and that prayers would not go against this. Clergy to decide themselves whether to use the prayers. It was highlighted that there will be an impact on the global Anglican network.
- **Church Planting:** Conversations have been taking place with church planting organisations, as well as discussions around what planting locally might look like. Steve has since written to Bishop Mark outlining some ideas and the response so far has been positive. Hopefully this time next year we will have a clearer shape of how things will look.

Thanks was given to everyone for all they give to the church, whether that be in finance, time, or ministry.

8 The meeting closed with prayer at 6.40pm.