

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN GODMANCHESTER

MINUTES OF THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS AND THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY, 30 APRIL 2023

1. Opening Prayers

The Revd David Busk opened the meeting with prayers. There were forty-three parishioners in attendance.

2. Election of Churchwardens

David Busk was pleased to report that Jean Morgan had offered to stand again as Churchwarden for another year but that Bob Hurd was standing down. He thanked Bob and recalled that he had been in position, this time, for nine years. He was stalwart, dependable and a wonderful Churchwarden and would be sorely missed. Everyone showed their appreciation with a round of applause. Bill Templeton offered to stand in his place.

Jean Morgan: proposed by Colin Thirlwall, seconded by Bob Hurd.

William Templeton: proposed by Robert Francis, seconded by Kate Barkshire.

There being no further nominations, Jean and Bill were elected by acclamation.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from John Hoyle, Paula Williams, Liz & John Thackray Stella Howard, Samantha Leigh-Smith, Daphne Meats, Ruth Ekblom, Anja Busk, Kevin Parks and Kate Robinson (Clerk – Jean Nicholls to stand-in; she was thanked by the Vicar)

4. Minutes of the last APCM held on 1 May 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting, having been approved by the PCC, were signed by the Revd David Busk.

5. Matters Arising from 2022 Minutes

None.

6. Reports

a. Electoral Roll changes since May 2021

Kate Robinson had reported that as at 15 April 2023 there were 110 names on the roll; the figure at the previous APCM was 104. One name had been removed and seven added. A copy of the application form for the electoral roll is available on the Church website, along with details of how to apply. David Busk expressed his thanks to Kate for the report.

b. PCC Activities over the Year

A summary is in the Annual Report and there were no comments. David Busk offered very grateful thanks to Jim Heeley and Colin Thirlwall who had helped produce the Annual Report.

c. Finance

The Financial Report to the APCM for the year to 31 December 2022 is in the Annual Report and had been approved by the PCC. Comment was made that this had only just been made public, and it was suggested that it should be made available earlier next year. The Vicar proposed its acceptance, which was carried with three abstentions saying there had not been time to read it thoroughly.

d. Fabric Committee

Colin Thirlwall reported that there had been very generous donations over the year, however, utility costs had tripled and it would be difficult to break even this year especially as we were on a fixed rate contract for utilities. The cypress tree had been removed because of its possible danger to individuals and damage to soakaways. Malcolm Harris said there was nothing further to report and was thanked for his continuing work.

e. Transformation Project

An outline of the current position is in the Annual Report. Colin Thirlwall said that our application to the Heritage Lottery Fund had been rejected because "*The rationale for the relocation of the museum was unclear and raised questions regarding the environmental conditions, options and feasibility for this proposal.*" They also questioned how the proposed project would meet our mandatory outcome of reaching a wider range of people. This would require greater clarity. It would seem that the aims of the HLF had changed and community places are now in fashion, whilst places of worship are not!

Colin said he had spent the majority of last year trying to determine these latest criteria, the emphasis of which seemed to be on repairs to buildings neglected during Covid, and community-based projects. It was suggested that we should reduce our bid to nearer £800K, rather than the full cost of the project.

Several events in 2022 slowed the work down, including the massive increase in the cost of raw materials and labour; our architect left Caroe Architecture to join Thomas Ford & Partners, and communication remained difficult because of the effects of Covid, with many organisations working from home and individuals not available for discussion.

The revised budget estimate gave a project cost of around £1.4m, against the previous £1.25m, which presented a difficulty with the HLF application, so it was decided to revisit the possibility of splitting the project into two phases. There will be no boiler replacement yet; other green options are being investigated.

Christopher Vane Percy thanked Colin for all his hard work and raised the question of the pews. Only a few have been sold experimentally, clearing the North Aisle, which has proved very useful, giving more concert space and room for the monthly Friday event, "Grub, Games and God". Robert Francis and Peter Irving were also thanked for their involvement. The issue of parking is to be discussed at a future PCC meeting.

It was noted that Adrian Sington is to start a new fund-raising initiative and Lucillia Azevedo suggested the return of the book stall and possible coffee mornings as fund raisers.

f. Deanery Synod

The Vicar reported several rural ministry problems, with churches unable to fill their important parish positions which, ultimately, might result in closure. An ongoing problem which needs our prayers.

7. Elections and Appointments

a. Deanery Synod

Two members were elected unanimously, as follows:

Peter Morgan, proposed by John Thackray, seconded by David Bowers
Margaret Quaife, proposed by John Newton, seconded by Ruth Ekblom

b. Parochial Church Council

Five members were retiring by rotation and two others were elected, as follows:

Lucilia Azevedo: proposed by Jean Morgan, seconded by Anja Busk
Bob Hurd: proposed by Colin Thirlwall, seconded by Malcolm Harris
Kevin Parks: proposed by Lucilia Azevedo, seconded by Kate Robinson
Simon Prince: proposed by David Hodge, seconded by Andrew Wright
Kate Robinson: proposed by Angela Wright, seconded by Kate Barkshire
Adrian Sington: proposed by Colin Thirlwall, seconded by Bob Hurd
Mike Westcott-Rudd: proposed by Bob Hurd, seconded by Christopher Vane-Percy

c. Sidespersons

Peter Morgan reported that all the current sidespersons are willing to stand again except Arthur West, who has stood down after many years' service. All were re-appointed by acclamation. The Vicar expressed his thanks to Arthur and to Peter Morgan and the team of sidespersons, who are the first point of contact for anyone coming to a service.

d. Independent Examiner

Gary John Fordham inspected the accounts for the year. His appointment was agreed unanimously and a formal vote of thanks to Gary was recorded.

8. Vicar's Review of the Year 2022-2023

David Busk began by saying that he felt it an enormous privilege to work at the heart of the community. He realises that this requires a lot of assistance from so many other people and started by thanking his churchwardens, Jean Morgan and Bob Hurd, and also Colin Thirlwall who wore so many different hats. He then thanked the PCC for their support, Luicillia Azevedo for her role as Verger, the Revd Canon Jonathan Young as Honorary Curate, noting particularly his home visits and the Revd Christopher Luffler for standing in at the 8 am service. He mentioned Liz Irving who would be standing down as Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, thanking her for all she had done, and also for her work with the Food Bank.

David then thanked everyone else for their presence and prayers. He said the life of the Church flourishes through prayer and that he was planning a new, regular, prayer group which he hoped would soon be active.

Lucilia Azevedo and Jean Morgan both thanked David for his leadership and guidance. This was followed by unanimous applause.

9. Any Other Business

Foodbank– Liz Irving said this was well used, but donations had dropped and more goods are always welcome. She also invited anyone who would like to help to call into the Baptist Church on a Thursday morning, between 10am and 2pm, to see how the system works and to have a cup of coffee.

There being no further business, David Busk thanked all for attending and closed the meeting with prayers and a communal saying of the Grace.

Chairman: Date:

Jean Nicholls
Temporary Secretary
1 May 2023