

SAINT MARK'S CHURCH REIGATE
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING SUNDAY 14 MAY 2023
HELD IN CHURCH AT THE 10.00AM PARISH EUCHARIST

Fr Martin Colton, Chairman of the Parochial Church Council was in the chair.

PRESENT:

Fifty-five parishioners in church.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from seven parishioners.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of the 2022 Annual Parochial Church Meeting were agreed and signed as an accurate record of what had taken place.

MATTERS ARISING:

There were no matters arising.

PRESENTATION OF THE ELECTORAL ROLL:

Following a revision of the Electoral Roll Mr Terrence Hancock reported that the number on the Roll now stands at 164. This represented a loss of three names due to death and the addition of four new names.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY WARDENS:

Mrs Jane Artis and Mr Timothy Warren was re-elected for a further year.

ELECTION OF DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES:

Having been duly proposed and seconded the following were elected each for a term of three years: Mrs Susanne Baker-Hedge and Mrs Sarah Walker. It is hoped to fill the remaining two vacancies as soon as possible.

ELECTION OF PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS:

With only one nomination for two available vacancies, Terrence Hancock was elected for a term of three years having been duly proposed and seconded.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS AND PRESENTATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT:

Fr Martin drew attention to the Annual Report which highlighted the various activities at St Mark's over the past year. He was very pleased to report that nearly all the various groups which had to be suspended during the period of the Covid pandemic have re-formed during 2022. The church accounts are now included in a separate Statutory Report and this together with the Annual Report are available on the church website. Printed copies of each can also be obtained on application to the Secretary of the Parochial Church Council.

REPORT UPON THE GOODS AND ORNAMENTS:

Mr Benjamin Read (Churchwarden) reported:

A number of changes, repairs and upgrades to the fabric of our church have been made in the last 12 months. We continue to seek the support of the Inspecting Architect following the quinquennial inspection in 2021 and whilst there is still work to be done, that of an urgent nature has now been completed – the new pigeon netting in the tower was installed recently. Additionally, repairs are in progress to the stained glass window on the South side that sustained minor damage.

Many other works remain to be addressed, but they are not of an immediately urgent nature. That said, we are expecting a schedule of works shortly, which will enable us to begin preparation for more repair to our wonderful Reigate stone building.

We have in recent years reported that work will be required in the next 5 to 10 years on our organ, and for the sake of harmonious relations with our PCC Secretary – and organist – I want it to be recorded that this still remains very much in our thoughts and plans for the next few years. We will need to raise funds for those works, which will not be insignificant in cost.

Last year I reported on the installation of the solar panels on our hall and those have proved to be a very valuable addition. There has been a small issue with the function of our battery storage solution, which has finally been resolved. Those panels now play a small role in helping to keep warm those parishioners who feel the cold a little more, with personal heated cushions now available for those who want to use them, all power by our solar energy.

We have also installed new thermostats in the hall and church that give us much greater control on the timing and level of heating provided, allowing us to improve the efficiency with which we heat our spaces.

In terms of the goods of the church, nothing was disposed of in 2022 and there have been no major additions either.

Finally Louise and I would like to thank all the many volunteers who have done so much behind the scenes to help keep our church open and performing its role both as the spiritual home for our community, but also in its wider role as a centre for community life.

THE CHURCH ACCOUNTS:

Mrs Melanie Crighton (Treasurer) gave a report about the 2022 accounts.

In 2022 our church income was £205,000 with expenditure of £219,000. Income from planned giving, collections and other donations represented 45% of total income, with rental income 21%, lettings 13% and other activities 9%. Gift Day donations totalled over £25,000 making up the final 12%.

Expenditure in 2023 is expected to be in excess of £240,000 with significant costs being incurred on the decoration and floors of the hall and foyer areas together with work already carried out on the church belfry installing netting to the louvre arches to protect from pigeons. It has been some years since we have undergone decoration work.

Although savings have been made in energy costs following the installation of solar panels last year and other green initiatives, overall our costs are increasing.

As a Church and a Charity, we aim to breakeven over a five-year period whilst retaining sufficient reserves to cover around six months expenditure and any unexpected events.

Looking ahead over the next few years the gas heating systems in both the church and hall will need to be replaced and work is required to be carried out on the organ and church sound system.

We are very grateful to all who donate to the church both financially and with their time and energy in all the many aspects of running activities. The church would not be able to operate or meet its financial obligations without this support.

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:

It was proposed by Mr Nigel Perkins and unanimously agreed that "Stewardship" should be appointed our Independent Examiner.

REPORT ON DEANERY SYNOD:

Presented by Mrs Sarah Walker

Deanery synod members: Sarah Walker, Suzanne Baker Hedge, Sara Johnson

The meetings themselves for those who don't know are a way of lay people and clergy keeping in touch across the Parish – sharing positives and what has worked across all areas of the church. What doesn't and asking for help or guidance from others. And promoting and evolving ideas into action.

The first Deanery synod meeting of 2021 focussed on drawing people to our faith. We discussed the **Reigate Deanery "Mission Action Plan (MAP)"** and defined the purpose or mission objectives as:

"Reigate Deanery provides a supportive framework for Churches to connect with each other.

We collectively develop and share ways to proclaim the love of God, to grow as disciples of Christ Jesus and see the Holy Spirit transform lives. We aim to be creative, exciting, fun and welcoming with servant hearts."

Three main "action areas" agreed upon were:

1. Connecting Local Churches
2. Christ Centred Disciples
3. Being creative in our Mission

Break off groups, to discuss drawing people to our faith threw up many ideas, such involving friends in the community side of things such as food banks and community lunches.

Part of the DS area for discussion is the Reigate Archdeaconry Social Justice Focus (RASJF)

Chris Elliot is our Deanery champion for this. This area includes: Raising awareness of County Lines drug dealing, modern slavery, teenage mental health and working to improve the lives of the exploited. Central to this is linking up services including the police with representatives from the Church.

The second meeting of the year in October 2021 was Reverend Anita Colpus's final meeting as Area Dean. This centred on the Environment and climate crisis. The strong trends of climate disruption are being hailed as a code red for humanity by the United Nations and focussed on 2 reasons why the church wants to act:

- 1) To show God our love and gratitude;
- 2) To show love of one's neighbours and reduce the impact on the poor.

Practical things we can do as a church community:

- Reduce our own clutter;
- Eat healthily, reduce meat and dairy, (vegetarian meals for Messy Church);
- Holiday locally;
- Dress fresh – meaning repair and buy second hand;
- Travel well – use public transport / cycle or walk;
- Change the system – reward green co.s from energy to financial institutions, supermarkets with your business;
- Move the pressure onto larger organisations by writing to them and asking them to take more action especially your MP. But most of all don't be overwhelmed by the big picture as an individual. Individual steps all count and that includes talking to others about climate action;
- There was an update on the renewed Hope Trust and a fourth person being employed post pandemic. Updated on the process of the house bought for four homeless men in the parish;
- Living in Love and Faith course was positive and enjoyable with over 100 participants;
- Deanery synod finances were approved with no queries or concerns;

The last meeting involved Fr Martin Colton officially being appointed Area Dean.

OTHER BUSINESS:

In his capacity as Organist and Choirmaster, Terrence Hancock reported that after forty years of loyal service to the church choir Janet Burns has decided to stand down. A suitable presentation will be made to her in due course.

On behalf of Saint Mark's congregation, Terrence Hancock voiced a vote of thanks to Fr Martin Colton for all he does through his ministry to the parish.

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 10.45am.