

PARISH OF ST PETER'S, COLCHESTER

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on Monday, March 11, 2023

1. Opening Bible Reading and Prayer: John 12
2. Apologies: Trevor Froude, Anne Kavanagh, Dan Watts
3. Declaration of conflicts of interest: None
4. Minutes of the previous meeting (January 15, 2023)
 - a. Approval
 - b. Matters arising

Re Item 4b: The passing of the reredos to St James is still an intention, but unlikely to happen within the next couple of months. A faculty application would be joint.

Action: MW to follow up after Easter

Re Item 5c: Tower Clock repairs: The ChurchCare application will not progress (see Item 7 below).

Standing Committee Summary:

Re Item 4g: Re a question about the Lloyds' DBS, Mark has talked to the Lloyds, and for now they do not intend to go ahead with any activities during the Vicar's sabbatical. (CofE logic was explained: Those with a previous PTO status have not necessarily kept up with safeguarding training, and cannot therefore preach or lead a service.)

Re Item 5: As to eligibility, other individuals may lead a service as long as the service takes place under the authority of a churchwarden (i.e. a churchwarden might introduce and hand over to the leader at the beginning of a service). This depends on DBS status, and not previously having been licensed/authorised. Such involvement can be used as practice or providing leadership experience.

Re Item 10: The furniture for the north aisle has not been forthcoming yet. This will require DAC approval. The library can be reinstated, although the location is as yet uncertain.

Re Item 4f: Richard has checked the Ecclesiastical Insurance documents, and liability of £2m would be extended to contractors. The question of public liability cover arose because we were requiring hall hirers to have £5m cover, but one of them only had £2m cover. As £2m is the level of cover that Ecclesiastical Insurance would extend to third parties (if requested), then we would not ask hirers for any higher level of cover.

Re Item 3: The conflict of interest lay in the fact that both Mark and Trevor have children who might benefit from financial help to attend Contagious.

Re Item 7: The closing date for applications is March 15. Information re applications is not available until after that, but the panel is poised to interview.

5. Short Reports

a. Churchwardens' Report

b. Fabric, Building and Redevelopment Report

A more formal quotation for the clock repairs has not yet been forthcoming. Rainwater entering the Church Hall has been dealt with.

c. Church Manager's Report

d. Safeguarding Report

See 10 below.

e. Financial Report

Under the new system of accounting, it appears that there is a great deal more money. This is because there is a requirement to include the Church Hall as an asset.

The Redevelopment Project has effected swings in voluntary income as grants inflate figures and donations received are then paid out some time later.

That planned giving has reduced is probably an indicator of a reaction to moves by the House of Bishops.

Jason Foxwell was approved as Independent Examiner by an email poll of PCC members.

6. Spotlight Report: Ministry

Recent increases in both attendance and those serving in ministry teams are very encouraging. While God is given thanks, more mundane reasons may be the families attract each other and the church is building a reputation. There was a reminder that existing, especially older, members of the congregation also need support, both practically and spiritually; we were reminded to always highlight any we feel are in need. Compliance is still being worked on. Information re a national safeguarding refresh is arriving in dribs and drabs.

Bernice has had help (from Liz Barker) with risk management records, and is now well prepared to administer them. This should all be in hand by the time Bernice hands over to her successor.

Richard has sought out, and emailed to Mark and Bernice, a fix for the problem with the Parish Office Mac mini.

Although the redevelopment now seems firmly in the past, the kitchen has been a great help with a growing congregation.

7. Tower Clock repairs

The August 2023 quotation was a little under £5000.

The ChurchCare grant application deadline (April 8), given its complexity (e.g. requiring a conservator's report), was too tight, and so this idea has been dropped.

The Fabric, Building and Redevelopment Report makes it clear that scaffolding costs (a concern at the last meeting) are unlikely to feature in any solution.

The Heather Loyd bequest (see 10b) is free of strings and suitable for financing this project.

Proposal: That the PCC contracts A. James Ltd to repair the clock, as per the existing quotation, using funds already acquired.

Result: In favour 10; Against 0.

Action: Wendy to contact the Archdeacon for permission.

8. Arrangements for Vicar's Sabbatical

Pastoral needs: Bernice will have a list of people who can be approached for help if need be. Mark will emphasise some ways in which the congregation can help.

Governance: This will be delegated to the Churchwardens.

Safeguarding: The PSO is key, but if need be the Archdeacon and the Diocesan

Safeguarding Team can be approached.

Weddings, Funerals and Baptisms: A wedding is unlikely, but both this and a funeral would depend on a list of officiants held by Bernice. Excepting an emergency, a baptism requests would need to wait until after the sabbatical period.

Seven Sundays are outstanding in terms of a preacher, but there will be some flexibility of help provided by Paul Southern (All Saints, Fordham), and perhaps also from All Souls, Langham Place, in addition to Duncan and Trevor. A level of consistency will be provided by following the parables of Luke throughout (apart from just one Sunday).

Richard has agreed to serve as technical back-up. Bernice will have access to service sheet templates, and will liaise with service leaders three weeks in advance.

Some information re the sabbatical period will be added to the website.

Some people have been approached to continue bible studies, and more will be contacted soon.

Action: Mark to produce some information re the sabbatical for the congregation.

9. PCC Away Day in September

The Diocese had agreed to fund this. Some people will be needed to take on the admin during Mark's sabbatical, and nominations were invited (by the end of the week).

10. Correspondence

a) An email from Anne Kavanagh to Mark: Concern has been expressed that the PSO has been absent from church for some time. While the PSO's commitment to the role is not in question, it is, e.g., a concern that new attendees will be unknown to the PSO and the PSO will be unfamiliar to many in the church community. The PCC is in agreement that safeguarding is of the utmost importance, and believes that a PSO knowing and being known to the congregation is very significant. The Vicar's imminent sabbatical lends urgency to the situation.

Action: One or two PCC members to meet Sue very soon to discuss the situation.

b) To Mark: A letter detailing the Heather Loyd bequest of £20,000, this without strings attached.

11. AOB (to be raised with the Chairman before the start of the meeting)

Duncan raised the possibility of an Internet link between the Church building and the Church Hall. There are several options available.

Proposal: That the various solutions be investigated, with a budget of £500.

Result: Agreed.

Action: Duncan, Richard, and Wendy will liaise to decide which option to use and what practical measures to take.

12. Future meetings

- a. Full PCC meetings: May 13, July 8, September 9, November 11
- b. Standing Committee meetings: April 15, June 10, August 12, October 14, December 9
- c. Annual Church Meetings (AMP & APCM): Wednesday, March 20, 2024

13. Closing Prayers