

**ST GEORGE THE MARTYR, WASH COMMON**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**  
**HELD IN THE CHURCH AND BY ZOOM ON TUESDAY 25 APRIL 2023**

**CHAIR:** Reverend Becky Bevan

The meeting opened at 7.30pm with the collect for St George's day (the previous day), read by Revd Becky Bevan. Revd Becky highlighted that documentation for the meeting was circulated in advance for review by all on the church electoral roll. A Zoom meeting was also active to allow participation by those unable to attend the meeting in person. Revd Becky welcomed Henrietta High as Acting PCC Secretary and thanked Elizabeth Pook and Mary Bishop for the refreshments.

**ATTENDANCE:** 44 (4 on zoom and 40 at church).

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** received from Mike and Barbara McKenzie, Alison and Richard Gill, Cathie Read, Norma Murray, Simon Pook, Craig Brown, Nina and Michael Tindall, Jon Houghton.

### **MEETING OF PARISHIONERS**

#### **1 Election of the Churchwardens**

John Huckle Proposed by Eila Orr, Seconded by John Gardner

Linda Ling Proposed by Sarah Pook, Seconded by Rita Gardner

John Huckle (for a second term of 3 years) and Linda Ling (for a first term of 3 years) were unanimously elected unopposed.

Rita Gardner, whose term of office as churchwarden ended at the meeting was thanked, as were those newly elected.

There being no other business the meeting was declared closed.

### **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

#### **1. Approval of Minutes of the APCM held on 26 April 2022**

The APCM minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2022 were approved as being a true record by all in attendance, and were duly signed by the vicar, Revd Becky Bevan.

#### **2. Reports**

The following formal reports, having been previously distributed to all on the electoral roll, were presented and received at the meeting with approval.

##### **i) Electoral Roll Report**

In accordance with the requirements of the Church of England, the Electoral Roll had been amended for the year and on the closing date there were 195 names on the roll. This has increased from 188 last year.

Revd Becky thanked Margaret Blaine for her diligent work as Electoral Roll Officer.

##### **ii) Report on the Proceedings of the PCC**

Revd Becky thanked Mary-Ann Ferneley who stepped down from her role as PCC Secretary at the end of December, for her excellent work, and the many things she brought to PCC.

As the interim PCC Secretary has recently taken up the post, Revd Becky Bevan gave a report of the key focus areas of the PCC for 2022, as detailed in the annual report. It was received by the meeting with no questions or comments. Revd Becky

noted that the PCC is a tremendous group of people working well together, leading the church and thanked them on everyone's behalf.

### iii) **Churchwardens' Report**

The Churchwarden's Report was printed in the Annual Informal Reports booklet, and John Huckle invited questions on the report. He reiterated thanks to all who have helped him and Rita Gardner in keeping the church running.

John thanked Rita for leading him into the churchwarden role, for teaching him and being so very helpful over the past six years.

Rita was presented with a gift from St George's in token of our thankfulness for her faithful service and generosity of spirit. Rita responded with thanks to the congregation for their kindness and support. Rita passed Linda Ling the keys to the church and hall and welcomed her to the role. A warm round of applause followed.

### 3i) **Vicar's Report**

Revd Becky Bevan highlighted key points from the report circulated ahead of the meeting, focusing on how we moved on from the Covid pandemic during 2022.

Using PowerPoint images she reminded the meeting of how the platinum jubilee and then the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II helped the nation and our community to reflect on her life of faithful service.

Revd Becky emphasised the importance of the congregation returning to socializing in 2022 and how community links were restored. Among many highlights during the year, she talked about the two pilgrimages and the Quiet Day, the return of Holiday Club in the summer, and success of Forest Church at Enborne. Even with the return to normal parish life, she mentioned how important it has been to continue broadcasting services, noting how the move to live-streaming has been enormously beneficial and thanking those who worked so hard to get the system installed. Her overall point was that we had strong foundations to build back on and have much to be thankful for.

Revd Becky discussed the church's vision statement which inspires the work of the church and its plans for the future, *"At St George's Church we are called by God and inspired by Jesus to encourage and equip one another to grow in faith and love, serving the community of Wash Common, reaching out to all people, especially those in need, and being good and faithful stewards of our gifts and the world's resources."*

Key areas of focus identified by the PCC in 2022 and shared with the congregation last September were reiterated. Three specific projects to advance these priorities - a café; a children and families worker; and the renovation of the exterior of the church - were identified. The café has already been launched; the other two projects will be further explored and shaped in 2023 along with a return to our greening agenda.

Revd Becky shared findings from a recent report from the Church of England on church attendance and recovery after the pandemic which reveal an average decline in attendance since 2019 of around 20 per cent (higher among children and young people). Becky made the point that we have built back much more strongly than this with indications over the past few months that we are almost back to pre-pandemic numbers. She thanked all those who had worked hard over the past nearly 3 years, often in stressful and dispiriting circumstances, to hold the community together.

Revd Becky remembered those whose funerals were conducted over the past year, and also the work of our former Curate Revd Julie Howell who we said goodbye to in July as she moved on to her new benefice. Becky highlighted St George's good relationship with St. John's, and the building relationship with St Michael's, enabling three parishes to flourish better together as one benefice to serve the people of south Newbury.

Revd Becky gave a special thank you to clergy colleagues Terry, Gary, Tom, Rita, George, and to the Churchwardens and to Alex in the Benefice Office, appreciating all of their gifts, and to all those who support the Church in serving God by serving one another.

#### **ii) Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts for 2022**

The PCC Treasurer, Francis Clayton, gave a summary of the Church and Centre finances for the past year with the help of PowerPoint slides summarising the key points from the Financial Statement in our Annual Report.

The Annual Report and Financial Statement have been approved by the PCC and signed by the vicar of St George's church (the Acting PCC secretary has not signed these this year as the role is currently in transition). The meeting received the Report with thanks.

Francis highlighted the positive work of the Centre, the need for a giving lead to allocate funds for giving from the Church, and gave thanks to those who give so generously to St George's in all sorts of ways.

Revd Becky also thanked Francis for all of his work as Treasurer, and noted the work that goes on behind the scenes pulling the accounts together.

#### **4. Elections**

Revd Becky thanked all those standing down from PCC this year, who are:

Linda Ling, Kim Tiley, John Gardner, Rita Gardner, Ronnie Herd

Two new nominations for PCC have been received:

- Chris Foster was proposed by Eileen Selsey and seconded by John Gardner
- Jon Houghton was proposed by Simon Pook and seconded by John Huckle

In addition, Robin Clugston has been attending PCC as a non-voting member since after APCM 2022, and this evening was proposed by Terry Rayson and seconded by John Bolan.

Chris Foster, Jon Houghton and Robin Clugston were elected unopposed.

Nominations for Newbury Deanery Synod have been received for the following three-year term:

- Sarah Pook was proposed by John Gardner and seconded by Nina Tindall
- Katherine Winrow was proposed by Elizabeth Pook and seconded by Chris Foster
- Philip Read was proposed by Elizabeth Pook and seconded by Alex Brown
- Ronnie Herd was proposed by Alan Pook, and seconded by Janet Wycherley

Sarah Pook, Katherine Winrow, Philip Read and Ronnie Herd were unanimously agreed and appointed. Revd Becky highlighted that this is a very encouraging outcome and thanked those who have agreed to serve.

Revd Becky proposed a motion on behalf of the PCC to change terms of office for Deanery Synod representatives to a maximum of two terms (six years) consecutively for new incumbents. This was voted on by the meeting and carried unanimously.

Sidespeople are no longer appointed at APCMs and are appointed by the PCC at the first meeting following the APCM. Revd Becky thanked Ronnie Herd and the welcome team of Sidespeople at St George's. Anyone wishing to join the Sidespeople team are to talk to Ronnie Herd.

**5. Appointments**

**i) Auditors**

The re-appointment of Haines Watts as our Auditors was approved unanimously.

**6. Any Parochial Questions**

Tom Moffatt highlighted the toll of the last couple of years since the pandemic on the clergy, and asked that the congregation give bolstering to all those who have led churches through this difficult period. Tom thanked Revd Becky and the wider clergy team, for their work. Revd Becky responded that she and the wider team have felt supported and highlighted the import of having had space to recover, think, pray and be, which has been needed, and noted that to move forward now feels more possible.

Chris Foster seconded the point on challenges in all sectors, and noted that it is worth continuing to reflect on how St George's welcomes those for whom getting to Church has been very difficult.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm. Revd Becky ended the meeting with a reflection from 1 Kings 19, to stop, pause, and to not be driven listening for God in the 'still small voice' - we are not called to be a successful church; we are called to be a faithful one.

Henrietta High

25 April 2023