

PARISH OF ST OLAVE WITH ST GILES, YORK

Meeting of the Parochial Church Council –

Wednesday 12th January 2022

7.30pm, via Zoom

MINUTES

In attendance: Rev Liz Hassall (Chair), Kingsley Boulton, Frances Brock, Helen Button, Roger Button, Jacqui Edwards, Margaret Eyre, Nicky Gladstone, Doreen Gurrey, Helen Jones, Jane Lockley, Ben Pugh, Buff Reid, Helen Robb, Christine Stanton, John Stanton, Paul Towers

Apologies for Absence: None

The meeting opened in prayer

Before formal business began, it was noted that this was Kingsley Boulton's last PCC meeting, after 41 years' service. Kingsley was thanked for this remarkable record.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2021 were approved, with one amendment, to add that when the removal of the Ash Tree was discussed, the need to replace it with something of a more suitable size in due course was also discussed.

It was noted that it has been agreed to start publishing the minutes on the St Olave's website, replacing the discontinued practice of displaying them in the St Giles' room. It was agreed that this would only happen following their formal approval, and the secretary would send them to Tina for the website after the meeting at which they were approved.

Action: Helen Jones

2. Matters arising:

2.1. Admin Support

Liz is now using her previous administrator for a few hours per week, but this is not enough hours to be productive for the long term. The more permanent post is still pending approval from other PCCs in the group; Liz has prepared a document with more information for them, and that will also be circulated to our PCC. It is hoped that there will be movement shortly.

Action: Liz Hassall

2.2. WhatsApp group

A small number of people have joined this, and are enjoying it. Anyone is welcome to join.

2.3. Christmas Collections

These were dedicated to Refugee Action York (RAY) and have been sent to them. RAY have replied to thank us and it is hoped that they will also provide us with further opportunities to support them, as many of us are keen to do this. Liz will forward Christine the email received in thanks, so we can confirm whether this is sufficient to confirm they have acknowledged receipt of funding.

Action: Liz Hassall

3. To note: Correspondence of Decisions prior to meeting

3.1. Faculty application re repairs to St Giles' Room windows

The PCC had approved by prior decision the processing of the paperwork required to replace the interim faculty with the permanent faculty. This is now in train, and the faculty will go through in due course.

4. To receive: Correspondence for the Attention of the PCC

4.1. Letter from Buff Reid regarding legacy

A letter had been received from Buff announcing that Dick Reid's will had left £5,000 to St Olave's, and that he had wishes the money to be spent enhancing the church.

It was proposed that an appropriate use of the funding would be repairing the broken carved pinnacles on the reredos behind the high altar, which was in line with Dick's wishes. It was commented that this would be a very fitting tribute, and thanks was offered to Buff.

Proposed: Ben Pugh; seconded Jacqui Edwards; passed unanimously.

Approved: The legacy from Dick Reid to be used to repair the carved pinnacles on the reredos behind the high altar.

4.2. Permission from Bishop John for Communion Assistants

The list had been received from Bishop John which lasts for three years. It has been displayed at the back of church.

4.3. Ash tree felling

Ben Pugh reported that further correspondence on this matter had been received from the DAC Secretary, who felt that we should have had the archdeacon's permission in place to take down the tree, despite the fact that the tree fell under the council's responsibility, the council had taken down the tree, and that they had had the right permissions in place from their side. Nonetheless, there had been an administrative oversight, and we are now in correspondence with the archdeacon

to rectify this. The archdeacon will be making recommendations concerning the replacement of the tree. However, it was further noted that the council won't grind out the bole of the tree; this is a specialist task and nothing can be put in the tree's place until it is done. One suggestion is to put a natural stone trough on the area of the stump, which would cost c. £450. Discussions are ongoing.

5. Future Plans

5.1. Social Events Planning

It was acknowledged that Covid uncertainty makes social events planning difficult. Ruth Sillar reported on a proposal to offer some online socialising opportunities. These would be around online talks, which have the benefit that they can be given by presenters anywhere in the world, and they can be good activities for winter evenings. Ruth made several suggestions for possible topics and speakers including a lawyer from Yorkshire now living in Rome working for a church-based organization that supports asylum seekers in Italy; a retired priest with a legal background who is a trustee of Church Action on Poverty; more locally, a representative from the Civic Trust who had recently spoken to Clifton Local history group about an online project on the history of the York air raids and their effect on local people.

Several members indicated they would potentially be interested in this type of activity and these subjects, and Ruth was asked to work further on a proposal for putting on such online talks. Whilst many members felt that in-person socialising is preferable, it is acknowledged that there are still difficulties planning this with any certainty, and that some members of our community remain unable to attend.

However, it was also agreed that we should be planning towards in-person socialising when it becomes possible, and that some of the ideas mentioned for online talks could translate well into in-person opportunities for both our own congregation and wider outreach, as many are interested in, for example, local history and social action. Whilst not all agreed that talks on social action topics could be classed as "social activity", there was agreement that activities around these topics are nonetheless important, and reflect some of our current concerns.

A related idea was proposed around "in conversation with" type events focused on current congregational members, or common themes (e.g. occupation) that could bring members of the congregation together and help us get to know each other better.

In summary, it was agreed that there was an appetite for gatherings, both online and in person when circumstances allowed, which could include picnics as soon as

the weather was better. It was also confirmed that we have a date for a St Crux day on Saturday 16th July.

Action: Ruth Sillar (to explore online events)
All members (to consider ideas for in-person events, and bring these to Liz/churchwardens)

5.2. Brief update on Covid restrictions including collections and refreshments

It was reported that because of the new variant, the next steps for loosening restrictions (including taking collections and offering refreshments) were now on hold and there would be no changes to the current mode of services for the time being.

Thanks was offered to everyone who had worked hard to make Christmas services work despite the difficult circumstances, especially Keith Wright.

5.3. Friday Service

The Friday quiet service was working well, reaching the small congregation at which it was aimed. It will continue for the time being, although there may be a change to a slightly later time, for which there is some demand.

5.4. Green Working Group

This is up and running, comprising Kingsley, Helen R, Helen J, Buff, Nicky, Margaret and Frances. One initial meeting has taken place (without notes to report) and the next meeting is planned for 2nd Feb. It was agreed that notes of future meetings should be reported up to PCC.

It was also agreed that the wider congregation should be informed of the group and invited to join. Helen Robb agreed to put together a notice for the newsletter.

Action: Helen Robb

5.5. Children and Young People

It was noted that we are currently not making any specific provision for children and young people, and that we want to move towards doing so again, although space issues and the need for distancing makes this very difficult. It was noted that the junior choir is now running again and has new members, but it was agreed that we need to do more, even though we have relatively few children among the congregation. There is a need to start again – which might be with a new Sunday School or other options.

It was agreed that advice from the diocese in this area would be extremely valuable.

5.6. Promoting St Olave – to form a sub-group and agree aims

There is a need to reinterpret the building for those visiting, incorporating history and the life of the church, and encouraging people to get involved. Members were asked for expressions of interest in being part of a task-and-finish group for this, with Buff Reid, to take this forward. Several members indicated interest, including Helen Robb who noted that she had shared some ideas on this regard by email in August 2021.

It was agreed that an item should go in the newsletter, and a notice given out in church, inviting interest in this group, perhaps at the same time as inviting interest in joining the Green working group.

Action: Buff Reid

6. Safeguarding

6.1. Some PCC members have not completed safeguarding training, and were told to do so as a matter of urgency. Support is available if anyone is having issues with finding the training or the technology needed to access it.

6.2. New safeguarding officer

Expressions of interest in this role have been received, and one individual is a strong candidate whose references are now being taken up. They will hopefully be able to be formally appointed shortly, using the safer recruitment process.

7. Items from Priest in Charge

7.1. Touchbase.

Kingsley Boulton reported that Touchbase has now been published online for some time, and that he has edited that last two issues. Whilst it would be good to continue this, it is too large a job for one individual, and an editorial team would be desirable. Ideally, this should be pulled from all four parishes, as Touchbase is a resource for the whole group, not just St Olave. It was noted that monthly editions are too onerous for both the editor and the website manager, but every two months could be a good aspiration, and that we should aim for a Lent issue this year.

It was agreed that the other churches should be asked whether they had a volunteer to join the editorial team, although it was also noted that we may need more than one person from St Olave, as ours is a larger congregation than the other parishes. Liz agreed to put the word out to the rest of the group.

Kingsley was thanked for his hard work in keeping Touchbase going online.

Action: Liz Hassall

7.2. Vision Survey

This was now drafted, and Helen Jones would send it to the rest of the membership during the next week, as a trial. A question would be included to allow PCC members to feedback on any changes required.

Action: Helen Jones

7.3. Plans for APCM

It was noted that this year the APCM would be joint across the parishes in the group, and was hoped to be held in the late spring (perhaps early May).

8. Treasurer's Report

The report and figures for 2021 had been circulated in advance, noting that some figures may be subject to change. The Treasurer reported that our finances are in a better position than expected, with more income generated than we had hoped, and some expenditure reduced.

Helen Robb raised the fund for the conservation work on the Etty tomb, which had been on hold until finances were certain and the stonemason was available. It was agreed that we now had sufficient funds to be able to commence this work with confidence, so Helen agreed to contact the stonemason to kick-start the work. It was noted that the correct faculty permission for the work is in place.

Action: Helen Robb

8.1. Gift Day 2021/2 – 30th January (Candlemas)

More details would be available shortly, and it was agreed that members should try and mention the day, and its importance, to friends in the congregation.

9. Churchwardens' Report

9.1. Quinquennial Report

Ben Pugh reported that this has finally been received, although completed more than two years ago. It was reported to contain no surprises or major issues, although there are maintenance needs that should be actioned, including work on the roof and tower, painting the flagpole and other general maintenance. The architect will be invited to take the churchwardens through the report in a walk around the church, to enable an action plan to be drawn up. A few other maintenance issues are also currently known.

Ben suggested that a Fabric and Buildings group would be helpful to take collective responsibility for maintenance issues, liaising with contractors etc. Volunteers for this were invited.

A question was raised about serious maintenance needs in the Church Hall relating to repairs required to the recessed gutter. Ben noted that the council had

been made aware of this, and we are awaiting a report back; we can't do much else as it's not actually out building.

It was further noted that the church decorators have finished inside and will be returning to decorate the Tower and St Giles' room in February.

Ben reported that the Trustees of 29 Marygate met this week and have agreed in principle that the immediate costs of works recommended by the quinquennial will be met by that trust up to £20,000. It is also hoped that other ways to enable the Trust to support useful work for the church can be found.

9.2. New sound system

Ben Pugh reported that two quotes had been received and a third was in train, through the DAC's recommended suppliers list. We would now need to start looking into funding sources from trusts and foundations, as the cost was likely to be in the region of £80,000. The aim is to provide a new sound system and live-streaming facilities fit for purpose for many years to come.

10. Deanery Synod Report

The Deanery Synod had not met since the last PCC, so there was no report.

11. Next Meeting: Wednesday, 23rd March, 7.30pm

12. Summary of meeting for distribution to congregation

It was noted that revisions had been agreed to the online newsletter, which would now incorporate only one written article at the start (by either clergy or laity), and that this article would be the PCC summary in weeks when PCC had just met. Jane Lockley volunteered to write a summary of this meeting for the next online newsletter, to include the following items:

- Kingsley's retirement from PCC
- WhatsApp group
- Christmas collection for RAY
- Legacy from Dick to repair the pinnacles
- Ash Tree: discussions underway for replacing it
- Social Events: possible online and plans for in-person events including picnics
- Update on Covid restrictions – no further lifting in light of current situation
- Two new working groups: Green and Promotion
- Touchbase: editorship as way of bringing people together from the four parishes

Action: Jane Lockley

The meeting closed with the grace

