



**THE PRIORY AND PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY, LANCASTER.
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
HELD ON SUNDAY MAY 29, 2022 AT 11:15am IN LANCASTER PRIORY**

PRESENT: 40 laypersons and four members of the clergy

CHAIRMAN: Leah Vasey-Saunders (Vicar)

SECRETARY: Mr Martin Mulligan

1. The opening prayer had taken place at the previous Vestry Meeting.
2. **MINUTES OF THE 2021 ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**
The minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of Sun May 30 2021 were distributed via e-mail to members of the PCC and further copies were available immediately prior to this meeting to those present.

There being no corrections, approval of the minutes of the Annual Parochial Church meeting of Sun May 30 2021 was proposed by Valerie Pearson and seconded by David Redmore, and carried unanimously by a show of hands.

3. MATTERS ARISING

No matters arose from the minutes of the 2021 meeting.

4. ELECTORAL ROLL

Mr Stuart Birse reported the number of people on the Electoral Roll stands at 171, of whom 84 were resident within the parish which is approximately 50.9 per cent. That was an overall increase of 7 since the last APCM in 2021. One name had been removed on a death. There were 8 new members.

5. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PCC AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PARISH.

- a) Chairman's Report – Leah Vasey-Saunders had submitted a written copy of her report which was distributed via e-mail to members of the PCC and further copies were available at the meeting.

She thanked those present especially for the welcome they had accorded to her as a mother and as a priest, and indeed to her entire family during the last year. It had been a big change of role.

She noted that in the aftermath of the Pandemic, a stop-start character to life had made everything more difficult but that things were now on a more even keel. She extended a particular tribute to the staff team. The Vision process was underway with a view to preparing the Awayday in July. June would see a second round of coffee mornings, afternoons and evenings at the Vicarage. She called for people to complete their questionnaires in this connection. The final strategy document would be signed off in September, with the launch with a follow up stewardship campaign in November. She highlighted that the parish had a significant monthly deficit, regular giving only just covering the Parish Share. Staff costs were £85k annually. On top of that were costs entailed by building repairs, heating and lighting. Etc, all expected to increase or any

additional mission and ministry as a result of the Vision process. To become more sustainable would require more than a 50 per cent increase in congregational giving. In the light of the cost of living increases this required difficult decisions as a church community, decisions with which the PCC was grappling. A question was asked as to how we could become a more generous giving church to which the Chairman replied that this was ultimately a theological issue involving preaching, since we give only out of all that God gives us. Another question was put as to who was on the staff team. The Chairman answered this by asking the team members in the congregation to stand up.

b) PCC Secretary's Report – Mr Martin Mulligan, the new secretary appointed from April 6 2022, read out the report prepared for the period by the former secretary Mr Stuart Birse. The Parochial Church Council met 10 times during the year 2021-2. Following the 2021 APCM there were 12 elected members of the laity serving on the PCC with two co-opted members. Four members were retiring by rotation at this APCM. The majority of the business of the PCC continues to be conducted through a small number of working groups. In addition to the Standing Committee there are the Priory Resources, World and Community, Spiritual Growth and development and the Ministry team. During the year Gill Witt and Alison Heatherington were the Parish's Safeguarding Officers.

c) Report from the Safeguarding Officer – The Chairman/Vicar reported in the absence of the Safeguarding officer that view databases were being compiled since the existing ones were not compliant when she arrived. Two separate issues had been satisfactorily resolved in the past year. The Pandemic had put strain on the system. The goal was to go beyond compliance in order to become exemplary. Gill Witt and Alison Heatherington remained the safeguarding officers.

6. THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE PCC FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DEC 2021.

Copies of the Annual Accounts were distributed to PCC members during the April PCC meeting and further copies were available for parishioners attending this annual meeting. A copy of the accounts is appended to the official minutes.

The Treasurer Barbara Gardner took the meeting through the Parish Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2021 by noting the 'Key Points' summary produced by the Treasurer. She emphasised that the Priory's finances are in a difficult position partly due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and that without the Big Hit Appeal which raised about £65.5K the situation would have been still worse. The planned giving was up by 6.2 per cent. Gift Aid figures were still below pre-Pandemic levels. Parish Share in 2022 is £103,948 – up by 18 per cent. There was a budgeted deficit of about £72K for 2022.

A question arose about a comparison in the accounts and the Treasurer replied that such a comparison with the previous year was a statutory requirement. Another question related to why the Parish Share had increased. The Treasurer replied that although the parish had no control over this, church attendance number played a part. The Chairman added that Parish Share would be higher without the presence in our midst of the Marsh community. We needed a positive approach in order to succeed as a flourishing Parish Church. A point of information from the floor pointed out that some parishes had an increase of Parish Share staged over three years.

The Chairman noted that a debt of gratitude was owed to the Treasurer Mrs Barbara Gardner in the creation of these accounts and her quite indispensable hard work throughout the year. The meeting extended a unanimous vote of thanks to the Treasurer and a round of applause.

7. REPORT ON THE FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

Churchwarden Dame Pauline Fielding presented the main points of the report to the meeting. The South and West elevation was still problematic. The repaired clock had stopped again. A grant application was underway. The fall of a large tree in the churchyard had damaged a wall. The City Council was responsible for its repair but would miss the original deadline of completing the work by the Jubilee. Archaeological investigation of the subsidence was also underway. A full fire risk assessment of the church buildings would be carried out very shortly. The Priory's energy efficiency was being reviewed. The Parish architect was retiring at the end of June and the appointment process to find a replacement was underway.

8. REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE DEANERY SYNOD.

The Chairman/Vicar picked out for special mention a meeting with the archdeacon and a meeting of refugees and asylum seekers. The meeting about the net zero challenge the Eco Church also deserved mention. The next meeting would be on June 20. This would have a speaker on Spiritual Care to Older People and was another initiative to which she urged attention. All were invited to attend. She said that the representatives to the Deanery Synod were Awena Carter, Barbara Gardner, Pauline Fielding, Richard Carter and Anne Roberts. Other written reports included the Vision 2026 report and the Vine Community, about which Awena Carter spoke briefly, referring people to the website and other resources. The aim was to construct something sustainable. She also hoped someone in the congregation might discern a lay vocation to be the new Vision Champion 2026.

9. TO ELECT PAROCHIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LAITY TO THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL.

There were six nominations to the four places available on the Parochial Church Council. These were: Christine Dickinson; Peter Hopwood; David Redmore; Beverley Roberts; Malik Salameh; Nick Walker.

Before the vote each candidate was invited to say very briefly what they saw themselves bringing to the role and why they deserved the vote.

The vote and the counting of the ballot followed.

The resulting elected representatives for a three year term from the next PCC meeting were: Christine Dickinson, Peter Hopwood, Beverley Roberts and Nick Walker.

10. APPOINTMENT OF AN AUDITOR OR INDEPENDENT EXAMINER OF THE PRIORY ACCOUNTS.

The Treasurer Mrs Barbara Gardner proposed that Scott & Wilkinson continue as auditor of the parish accounts for the year 2022. This was seconded by Mr Nick Walker and carried unanimously by those present.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Pauline Fielding would be sworn in as churchwarden at the primary visitation on June 8.

The meeting closed with a short prayer and the Grace.

Signed: _____ Date: _____ (Revd Leah Vasey-Saunders, Chair)