

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday May 21, 2023  
at 11.30am in Lancaster Priory**

**PRESENT:** 51 members of the laity and 5 members of the clergy attended the meeting.

**CHAIR:** Leah Vasey-Saunders (Vicar).

**SECRETARY:** Mr Martin Mulligan

**1. PRAYER**

The opening prayer had taken place at the previous Vestry meeting.

**2. MINUTES OF THE 2022 ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

The Minutes of the APCM for Sun May 29, 2022 were made available on the website in advance and copies were available at the meeting. There being no corrections or amendments a MOTION to accept the Minutes was proposed by Beverley Roberts and seconded by Christine Dickinson. The vote was unanimous.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the 2022 meeting.

**4. ELECTORAL ROLL**

Mr Stuart Birse reported that the PCC agreed to the addition of 5 new members which took the number of people on the Electoral Roll to 178, of which 51 per cent were resident in the Parish. This was down from 52 per cent from last year.

The number on the Electoral Roll now stands at 179, of which 88 are resident in the parish (about 49 per cent).

The total number is an increase of 6 on last year's APCM tally, with an increase of 1 since the September 2022 PCC meeting. In this revision period prior to the 2023 APCM, 3 names were removed by death, 5 names removed because they have not regularly worshipped in the parish for more than six months. There are 9 new members in this revision period.

**5. VICAR'S ANNUAL REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS OF THE PCC AND ACTIVITIES OF THE PARISH**

Vicar's Report – Leah Vasey-Saunders had submitted a written copy of her report which was distributed before the meeting and copies were available at the meeting.

Leah Vasey-Saunders recommended the audience to turn to Page 5 of the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the detailed story of the year 2022.

The core strengths identified by the Vicar and the PCC at the beginning of the process were; Worship, Education, Community and Commerce. The priorities were to inspire new generations and to "grow deeper roots" on The Marsh. Also, to be a resource for the City Diocese and the region, encouraging new ministries. Caring for God's Creation and acknowledging His generosity were other important priorities. In terms of youth groups, there was much more congregational involvement now with young people than this time

last year. Small but important changes to the music department had enabled complete parity for boys and girls in practise and worship.

Regarding The Marsh, Katie Schad was the key person. More people were involved there than a year ago and a Gardening Club was now up and running.

David Redmore was the eco-champion and involved in caring for the parish grounds.

Beverley Roberts and Nick Walker as assistant wardens had proved a terrific resource, especially regarding transmitting the history of the Priory. The goal was to expand to have 4 assistants to the churchwardens. This would be consistent with the aim of inspiring new generations.

2022 had seen a difficult year for the Staff Team. Overwork had to be addressed. LV-S thanked the members of the Staff for all their compassion and graceful action during what had been a difficult time for everyone.

GENEROSITY CAMPAIGN. LV-S said that this was probably what most of the meeting had been waiting to hear. Letters of thanks will go out in June 2023. She was able to announce that the impact of the Giving Campaign on a full calendar year was an increase of £22,672 before Gift Aid. (Plus £5099 Gift Aid). That meant a total increase of £27,771. This was an impressive response for which she thanked all those responsible. She wanted to add that the process was still underway, and some people may have adjusted their giving without making the Treasurer aware. She urged those people to talk to Barbara Gardner, the Treasurer, who was 'a master of confidentiality'. The current Budget estimate for the full year 2024 is £98,545.

The generosity campaign/Giving Scheme would be repeated each year. Looking forward in other financial affairs the mission and ministry would involve continuing to address the deficit which had been nearly halved by response to the Giving Campaign, to identify grant funding for the Music department and building work at the Priory, the ongoing quest to find a new Music Director, and to grow diversity of worship to reflect a a more diverse community. Music from Zimbabwe had figured in a recent service.

Lois Kirtley had taken the lead in bringing leaders for Young Church. There was also a ministry to the housebound and those in residential care. Also, to network and include people new to the church. A boost could be expected when Louis the associate priest joins us next month.

It was important that The Priory be visibly present on The Marsh. LV-S wanted to invite the Marsh prayer group to an event in worship at The Priory during the 10am Sunday service. Work was also underway to update flyers, leaflets and signage around the Priory church and to take note of the findings of Facing the Past. In this connection, too, LV-S wanted to set up an annual lecture to address our historic complicity in transatlantic slavery.

An eco-policy for the PCC to sign up to is another medium-term goal.

The Vicar was confident that up to 80 per cent of this ambitious program would happen and picked out for special mention the other trailblazers involved: Louis Kirtley, Richard Carter, Christine Mullineaux, Katie Schad, Kaarina Leong.

She asked if there were questions at the end of her report.

John Dickinson observed from the floor that this record of problem-solving and leadership identified LV-S herself as a formidable woman. He extended his thanks and that of the congregation. Long and loud applause followed.

## **6. PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Mr Martin Mulligan told the meeting that the PCC had met 10 times during the year. The officers were Vice Chairman Pauline Fielding, Treasurer Barbara Gardner, Electoral Roll Stuart Birse.

Four members were retiring by rotation at this APCM. They were Mary Davis, Sara Hutchins, Valerie Pearson, and Malik Salameh. Co-opted members who were ending their terms were David Redmore and Kim Robinson.

During the year the Parish safeguarding Officers were Gill Witt and Alison Heatherington.

He added that PCC Minutes were available to the public on request to the Parish Office after they have been approved by the PCC the following month.

## **7. SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

LV-S said she had the Safeguarding Action Plan available on request. Thanks were due to Gill Witt and Alison Heatherington, whose report was made available on the website and online in advance of the meeting.

## **8. THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PCC YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31 2022**

Barbara Gardner as Treasurer had provided a detailed comprehensive report for this accounting period that was available online and in print form in advance of and at the meeting. She highlighted several items from the Financial Accounts as key points.

The Gaea exhibition had netted £6,700 when all the accounts were in. Planned Giving during the accounting period saw an increase of 2.5 per cent on 2021. There had been an increase in Church Hire fees after the pandemic. Collections had also increased in value but had not recovered to pre-Pandemic levels. Detailed notes were found on page 16 of the report.

Parish Share paid to Diocese was £101,699, an increase of 15 per cent on 2021. This was the single largest item in the accounts for the relevant year. Looking forward to 2023, Parish Share was £94,705, down by 8.9 per cent on the previous year. Lower weekly regular attendance accounted for this, calculated from a three-year rolling average. (ie. A reduction due to attendance figures: 211 people in 2022 compared with 168 people in 2023.)

At the start of the year we had a budgeted deficit for 2023 of £66,391. Barbara Gardner as Treasurer was still recalculating the Generosity Campaign final tally (four adjustments had

been necessary to date!) but it was clear that there was a very substantial £20K improvement in the financial position as a direct result of the Lenten Giving Campaign.

BG said finally that the electricity tariff had increased threefold.

There were no questions.

LV-S thanked the Treasurer for her work and said that she was the best Treasurer in her experience. The meeting showed its appreciation with a huge round of applause.

#### **9. REPORT ON THE FABRIC, GOODS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCH**

Pauline Fielding's Churchwarden's report was made available online in advance of the meeting. LV-S thanked the Property Committee and Resources Group and churchwardens for their year-round diligence.

#### **10. REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE DEANERY SYNOD**

LV-S outlined the synodic structure – deanery synod, diocesan synod, general synod - of the Church of England for the benefit of those unacquainted with it. She had served on the General Synod (or law-making body). She urged people to consider standing for the Deanery Synod next year when it comes up.

#### **11. ANY OTHER WRITTEN REPORTS**

There were no other written reports.

#### **12. TO ELECT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LAITY TO THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL**

LV-S pointed out to the meeting that there were 4 PCC vacancies. In an interim year the PCC can co-opt members. The first meeting of the PCC on June 5 2023 would see that this happens. New people were needed. There were two nominations, Jean Simpson and Malik Salameh.

**MOTION:** To put forward Jean Simpson for the PCC. Proposer: Lois Kirtley. Seconded: Beverley Roberts. The vote was unanimous. No one wished to reopen nominations.

**MOTION:** To put forward Malik Salameh for the PCC. Proposer: Barbara Gardner. Seconded: Margaret Saunders. The vote was unanimous. Two vacancies remain.

#### **13. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER FOR THE PRIORY ACCOUNTS**

Barbara Gardner the Treasurer confirmed that Scott and Wilson of Dalton Square, Lancaster had acted for us during 2022.

**MOTION:** To reappoint the Independent Examiner. Proposer: Barbara Gardner. Seconded: Nick Walker. The vote was unanimous.

#### **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**

There was none.

LV-S closed the meeting.