



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

held on **Wednesday 8th September 2021**
at 7.15pm in St Mary's Hall

Present: Sean Semple (Chairman), Bryan Jones (Churchwarden), John Setchfield (Churchwarden), Gerald Altree, Janet Cooper, Paul Cummings, Freda Davies, Paul Eward, Tiffany Jackson, Paul Mason, Anne Morris, Rachel Lewis, Mark Sanderson, Rosie Winyard,

1. Chairman's welcome and opening prayers

Sean began by asking members to share examples of where they had found God in their lives recently. Tiffany then concluded with prayer.

2. Closed Churchyard

to receive a report from Councillor Rob Taylor

Cllr Taylor had nothing to report and sent his apologies

The Royal British Legion Tree will be planted at 12 noon on 16th September.

There was concern that there had been very little weed control near many of the paths and weeds were causing some areas of the path to break up.

3. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Peter Reynolds, Roy Milnes and Tim Waters.

4. Rector's Report

to receive and note a report from the Rector

i The Rector's report was noted.

ii Proposed: Bryan Jones Seconded: Mark Sanderson unanimous

It was resolved to allow the Herefordshire Archive Service to publish the church's registers online

iii Proposed: Bryan Jones Seconded: Janet Cooper unanimous

The PCC of St Mary's Church has granted permission to the Churches in Ross Community Larder to use the basement of St Mary the Virgin Church Hall.

A statement to that effect would be sent to them for their registration as a charity.

5. Inspiring Faith Portfolio and Inspiring Faith in Schools Portfolio

to receive a progress report from the Inspiring Faith convenors, Peter Reynolds and Paul Mason

Peter's report had been circulated and was noted. Tiffany added that both Toast and Messy Church were going well with new families coming and the LEAF had attracted 6 teenagers to a barbecue at the Rectory.

Paul spoke about the need to revive the invitation to schools to come to the church for various activities. Existing work sheets need to be updated (Paul Cummings and Mark Sanderson have offered to help with this). A battery of adults is also needed (possibly those already involved in "Open the Book").

Previously there had been a policy to charge schools however this was felt to be wrong.

Proposed: Paul Mason Seconded: Mark Sanderson unanimous

It was resolved to scrap all fees for schools coming to church and not to charge children to visit.

6. Inspiring Hope Portfolio

to receive a progress report from the Inspiring Hope convenor, Paul Cummings
Paul's report had been circulated and was noted.

Paul highlighted the fact that our focus should be to work with the Community Development Trust and the congregation should be encouraged to volunteer to work with it.

7. Inspiring Love Portfolio

to receive a progress report from the Inspiring Love convenor, Rosie Winyard

A report had been circulated. The church has been awarded a silver award from A-Rocha and Rosie and the Ecochurch committee were commended for their work.

Rosie showed members the signage and bird boxes made by Enviroability and had been inspired by the work the charity was doing.

Stephen Jackson has spoken to the eco church working group about the possibility of siting a pilot hydroponics site (a box 5ft square). Discussion took place on the best place to site it, one suggestion being the South Porch which led to concern over storage of equipment in regular use in church.

More information is needed from Stephen and suggestions for easy access storage will be welcomed.

Rosie also asked if we could have a Sunday service slot (perhaps at Harvest) to talk more about eco church.

8. Minutes of the last meeting

to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 30th June 2021

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

9. Digital Ministry

to receive a report from Mark Sanderson

A report had been circulated, together with three quotes for a) a new sound system, b) a new visual system (screen and TV monitors) and c) media (streaming) and security camera system. Mark advised that he felt a new sound system was unnecessary for our current needs – issues recently had been as a result of "human error" and not because of the system itself – something which could just as easily happen with a new system - and one faulty mic which had now been repaired. However, there are good reasons to invest in a new system in order to be able to amplify different sorts of music for both worship and concerts. The use of sound panels would also be an advantage.

It was agreed:

- to lock away the key to the current sound cabinet
- to educate all readers again on the correct use of microphones
- to get a further quote for a suitable sound system
- to consult the ministry team for their input

Should we decide to go ahead, it is hoped the Friends of St Mary's might fund the project. No discussion took place regarding visuals or streaming except to say that numbers watching our services are now down to single digits with no record of who they are. Mark added that the camera purchase agreed at the last meeting would not be purchased until we know exactly what the way forward is to be.

10. Queen's Platinum Jubilee

to note that the church will be playing a major role in the town's festivities to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee from 2nd to 5th June 2022

This was noted and will form a standing item on future agendas.

11. Standing Committee Report

To ratify decisions made by the standing committee on 31st July 2021

- i. PCC recognition of Alyx Miller-Hall as the co-ordinator of Toast and Toddle
- ii. Purchase of two more round tables for the church (the wheeled type already in the church), as Toast, Messy Church and Sunday refreshments are all needing more tables.

Proposed: Paul Eward Seconded: Paul Mason unanimous

It was resolved to ratify the two decisions of the Standing Committee on 31st July 2021.

12. Finance

- i to receive a report from the Treasurer
The Treasurer's report had been circulated and was accepted.
There was a question about digital giving and gift aid.
The concerns regarding the huge deficit were again raised. It was agreed that the treasurer and finance group be asked to identify financial priorities and produce a 'break even' plan for the next three years to be considered at the next PCC meeting.
- ii to note final arrangements for the Stewardship Campaign on Sunday 3rd October and Cheese and Wine on Wednesday 6th October.
This was noted. It was agreed to email invitations to regular givers where possible.
- iii to resolve to offer an increase of 1% on the remuneration of the Organist and the Director of Music, back dated to 1st January 2021

Proposed: Paul Eward Seconded: Paul Cummings unanimous

It was resolved to offer an increase of 1% on the remuneration of the Organist and the Director of Music, back dated to 1st January 2021

13. St Mary's Church building

- i. to receive an update on the progress of the quinquennial and insurance inspections
John Setchfield reported that both the quinquennial and insurance inspections had taken place but there were no reports yet.
He was aware that a structural engineer would be required to look at the cross on the chancel roof.
Peter Quin, a landscape architect had been in touch regarding the open churchyard and had suggested that planting yellow rattle would help reduce the coarse grasses and encourage other wild flowers to grow.
There were also two large trees in the open churchyard which were diseased and would require felling (a horse chestnut and an ash). John would look into this.

- ii. to make a decision on whether or not to allow the Centre for Birds of Prey to build a nesting platform for any passing peregrine falcon
There was some discussion and a point was raised that unless peregrines are already roosting on the church, they would not be choosing to nest here. It was also felt that it would be highly unlikely that a peregrine would choose to nest only 10 meters from the ground (the height of the chancel roof) when normally they are found nesting at over 20 meters above the ground.

Proposed: Rosie Winyard Seconded: Janet Cooper unanimous

It was resolved to defer any decision about whether to allow a nesting box on the church until such time as there was evidence of peregrines roosting on the church.

- iii. to receive an update on the progress of installing a defibrillator for the church
No progress to date.
- iv. to receive an update on progress of the proposed photographic backdrop to the high altar from Mark
The photographer had been in hospital but is now recovering and had been to see the church again last week.

14. St Mary's Hall

to receive a report from Peter Reynolds

The report was noted.

Bryan reported that Turning Point had requested additional washing areas and negotiations with them are ongoing.

13. Fundraising & Social Committee

to receive a report from the Fundraising Committee

A comprehensive report of planned events had been circulated and was noted.

Sean drew attention to the Big Picnic this coming Sunday, encouraging members to go down to Wye Street between 11.30 and 1.30, ideally with a picnic!

Members were also asked to spread the word about the Christmas Tree Festival (19th to 23rd November). Full details and application form are on the website.

14. Safeguarding

to receive a report and agree any actions arising from it

The report was noted.

Judith is now drawing up an action plan. The Archdeacon will be inspecting all safeguarding plans throughout the deanery this month.

15. Health and Safety

to consider and agree any actions required

Following a fire inspection, three new emergency light fittings need replacing in the hall.

16. Date of next meeting

the next meeting will take place on Wednesday 10th November 2021 at 7.00pm

The meeting with the Grace at 9.03pm.


