

## **Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Mary and St Chad's Church, Brewood, held in the Church on Sunday 24th April 2022 at 11.30 a.m.**

Thirty-one Parishioners attended the meeting. The Chairman Rev. Phil Moon welcomed everyone and opened the meeting in prayer.

### **Appointment of Secretary to the meeting**

It was agreed that Gerry Shenton act as secretary to the meeting.

### **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Joanna Monckton

### **Minutes of the last APCM held on 26th May 2021**

The minutes were on the church website and had been available on the notice board for the past two Sundays. The minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by Revd. Phil.

### **Matter Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **Vicar's Message**

I imagine that if you think back to when you woke up this morning and were contemplating what today might have in store, things have turned out rather differently.

So I begin my vicar's report by reiterating and expanding on what has been read out. The fact is, it has been a strange and a challenging last couple of years. The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on all of us. And it has led us to reflect on the things that really matter to us.

When you can't see your family, except on Zoom calls, when you can't go on holiday, when you can't even go out for more than one walk, or travel more than 5 miles from home without risking arrest (remember that?), when you're rightly very concerned about your health and well-being, and worry there might be a terminal infection just round the corner waiting to zap you... when all that's going on, it does put everything else in life in perspective. It leads you to assess your priorities.

The Diocese have had to do the same, driven by significant shortfalls in their finances. As part of this, over a year ago now, the Bishops conducted an exercise asking clergy of more senior age (those over 60!) to give some indication, in confidence, of their retirement plans, if they had any, to help the Diocese try to make future staff deployment decisions on a more informed basis. The alternative, in extremis, might mean redundancies having to be made. Inevitably, in such a case, it would be the younger, more recent recruits who were likely to be the first casualties – 'last in first out' as they say. It hasn't come to that thankfully, yet, but such an eventuality just wouldn't seem right for the future state of the church.

I replied to the bishop, in the light both of this, and the re-evaluation of life priorities that Pam and I have reflected on ourselves since the start of the pandemic, that I would probably plan to retire in the summer of 2022.

I communicated this to the staff team shortly afterwards. Even so, it did seem like quite a long way off back then – it doesn't anymore!

That said, in June I'll be celebrating my 63<sup>rd</sup> birthday. I will have been working as an ordained minister in full-time stipendiary ministry for a third of my life. It's time for a change.

Maybe your reaction is one of shock. Or disappointment. Or joy.

I'm sorry about that. But it does feel that it's the right time - physically, spiritually, and emotionally - for us to do this. We're going to live back up north in West Yorkshire. It's a part of the country we know and love, having lived in the area for 10 years, and it's near to family and friends.

From a Christian ministry perspective, not having the privilege and the responsibility of running a church, or two, means being free to focus on some specific areas. I'd like to spend more time offering Bible teaching courses – there's a whole load of West Yorkshire congregations who've never heard of SACRED, let alone had a go at it – I hope to help out a little in the local church when invited to do so – and I look forward to being a roadie as the Shroud Exhibition continues to go to new places, and some old ones, around the country.

So much for us. How about Brewood Church?

Well apart from the Trinitarian God in whose name we do everything we do - Father, risen Son, and Holy Spirit – we have two great assets.

The first is this building. I know that sometimes it's a bit of a headache, when the roof leaks or the heating system conks out, or the organ goes a bit funny, but this place has stood as a witness to the Christian faith for centuries, and will do for centuries more. Think of some of the great events you've enjoyed here over the years, as well as the weekly services.

It's a beautiful, well-loved, greatly appreciated place, and we are but temporary stewards of it in a long, long, chain of faithful people.

The second asset is people. You lot! We are blessed with a very capable and gifted staff team. Marilyn may be doing rather less, but what she does do is always to a very high standard. We are very lucky to have Cathy as our schools and children's minister. She is already having quite an impact on the local schoolchildren, and it's wonderful to see Messy Church and the Praise and Play toddler group both thriving. And Cathy heads-up the Wide Open Worship team that has led some inspiring and memorable services on the second Sundays. You should make a point of going.

I thank Jeremy Oakley for his contributions leading and preaching, especially back at Christmas for the Midnight Communion when I told him the day before that I would have to self-isolate!

John Jordan has made a very welcome return to the Staff Team, after his illness, and is ever willing and able to do what he can to serve, as are Shirley, occasionally, and Celia, very occasionally. You're in good hands.

Brewood is also blessed with so many of you willing to roll your sleeves up and get involved in so many different ways – being churchwardens, PCC secretary, treasurer, PCC or Deanery Synod members, vergers, news sheet producers, Mothers Union officers, grass-cutters, cleaners (we could do with some more please), musicians, singers, PA & projector operators, bell-ringers, welcomers, flower arrangers, coffee makers, page-turner on the memorial book... and so on. I thank you all for your contributions.

To some other matters. Services. I'm already taking steps to ensure that Sunday services are covered for several months ahead. As well as our talented Staff Team, I'm delighted to say that Reverend Keith Elbourne, a lovely retired and experienced minister who lives in Codsall is looking forward to helping out at Brewood and Bishops Wood a couple of Sundays a month. He and Liz have already attended several times, and he's going to preach here next week. I've also been arranging some visits from Diocesan staff: bishops, archdeacons and the like. Inevitably, though, we're going to need a degree of perseverance, patience and flexibility.

Admin. In the coming weeks, I'll be making a definitive list of the jobs that need covering. There will be a few that need taking on – ideally with no one person taking on too much, but simply doing their bit to help.

I am 100% confident that while Pam and I may be abandoning this church, Jesus will never abandon it. He is with you, always. And already he has formed his plans for the future here, one where you will thrive and grow to continue to be shaped into the people he wants you to be. Believe it.

In the meantime, there'll be lots of time in the coming months for saying goodbye. But for now, I simply thank you for the love and support you've consistently shown me over these last 6 years. And I ask you for your prayers as we embark on this next adventure in our lives.

You, of course, are assured of mine. Thank you.

## **Questions**

In answer to a question Phil said that he would be finishing on 21st July, this is the last day of the school year.

## **PCC Report for 2021**

This had been available on the notice board and on the website and included details of members, meetings held and topics discussed. The PCC met six times in 2021.

## **Electoral Roll**

In 2021 there were 143 people on the electoral roll 25 of whom live outside the parish.

## **To adopt the Inspected Accounts for 2020**

The accounts were on the website and had been available on the church notice board for inspection. The accounts had been audited by David Keates and passed without comment.

David said that the reserves had been moved to an investment account.

David Hunt expressed thanks to David Keates, for his faithful work in auditing our accounts.

He also thanked Rebecca Jones Reading for stepping up to help with the work of treasurer.

David said that he would like to hand over the work of collecting Gift Aid. The system is computerised and doesn't take a lot of time. He asked that anyone interested speak to him after the meeting.

Rev. Phil said that although we are currently solvent there is no room for complacency. In the light of the recent Quinquennial inspection there were some significant repairs that would be needed in the not too distant future.

## **Appointment of Auditor**

As David Keates is currently in hospital it was suggested that we delay the appointment of auditors. Martin Shenton said that the current auditor should be reappointed and a new appointment made if it was deemed necessary in future. This was agreed.

## **Church wardens Report**

Chris Bywater said that it has been an interesting period to be Church Warden and felt that the job had changed over the last two years.

He had just received the Quinquennial report and there was a lot to grapple with, significant items of expense were the roof leak in the side aisle and the flashing on top of the tower. He would seek advice from the Quinquennial team.

Thanks were expressed to Ken and Chris

## **Deanery Synod Report**

The Deanery met twice in 2021, items discussed included finance cuts, staff deployment, 'Shaping for Mission' which covered children's and young people's work, new housing estates, outdoor church and the environment.

## **Diocesan Synod Report**

Phil said that the report would be on the website. He said that the Brewood Parish Share had come down. In future this will be called the Common Purse.

## **Vestry Meeting – Appointment of Church Wardens**

Ken Ebbrell and Chris Bywater stood down as Churchwardens. Thanks were expressed to them both for all the work they had done over the past year.

Chris Bywater and Megan Pittwood, being eligible were nominated, seconded and duly elected to serve as Churchwardens for the following year.

## **Election of PCC Members**

There were three nominations for the PCC. The following people being eligible were nominated, seconded and duly elected to serve on the PCC: Ken Ebbrell, Robert Hunter and John Jordan.

## **Deanery Synod Representative**

Our parish is in the Penkrige Deanery and we currently have one representative. There were no further nominations.

## **To Appoint Welcomers**

It was agreed that existing welcomers would remain in post until April 2023 with the PCC appointing new people as required.

## **AOB**

Lavinia Newell said that the path from the West door to the gate was in a bad state of repair and also badly lit. Phil asked that it be put on the agenda for the next PCC meeting.

The meeting closed with Grace at 12.15 p.m.