

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, HOLBEACH

Tuesday, 10th October 2023

PCC MINUTES

Present: Revd Sherine Angus, Kevin Dodd, Les Crowson, Marion Goodman, Michael Goodman, Kim Biggs, Lynne Barkes, Jackie Sheldrake, Helen Drake, Judy Kelly, Roger Jennings, Gill Graper, Chris Penney (Treasurer) was present for the financial items discussed at the meeting.

Apologies for absence: Michael Barton, Martin Butler, Margaret Whaley

Opening Prayers were said.

Review of previous meeting: The Minutes were accepted as being a true record, with the addition of Helen Drake's name to the Present list, and signed by the Lay Chair.

Correspondence:

- Information had been received about events and services organised by Churches Together East Elloe. The next Unity service will take place on Tuesday, 23rd January 2024, 7.00 p.m. at the Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Holbeach
- All is working well with regard to our Deanery Administrator, Caz Dennis, who is officially employed by Holbeach PCC and line managed by Gill. When Caz is unable to do hours on her regular pattern of days, she makes the time up on other days and notifies all priests and funeral directors of the change.
- Micki Carey Slater is now working for the Diocese, as well as the 2 days a week she is working for our Deanery. PCC is most appreciative of the work she does with so many young people in our Deanery. Sherine is now her Line Manager.

Finances:

Chris Penney presented the current financial statement (see separate document) and asked for questions about the difficult situation the PCC is in. A lengthy discussion ensued with the following points being of greatest importance:

- Sherine had had meetings with Bishop Stephen and Bishop Nicholas when the problems about our financial situation were discussed. They recognise that Type 1 and Type 2 churches need greater support to meet the demands of their aspirations and their covenanting to the Diocese which should be able to cover the cost of employing a priest.
- Time must be allowed for growth, however, where people can feel cared for and loved and therefore more able to support their local church.
- In the past few years people have not revised their giving and this needs to be addressed. This year the shortfall in our income is in the region of £33,000.
- The Diocese is there to give practical support and advice.
- There are various areas of our outgoings and expenditure that need to be reviewed and decisions taken about how we might cut costs.
- The Diocese needs to take into account that we are not an affluent area and the system, for calculating the Covenant that should be paid, is not taking into account the social deprivation of the area.
- Sherine will be presenting a statement at the service on Sunday to encourage members of the congregation to review their giving.
- Kevin suggested that the wording in the Friends booklet may need to be revised. It is hoped that during the event on 2nd December many people in the community will wish to give a subscription which will help to support their local church.

- It is hoped that through negotiation with the Diocese there will be an agreement that our Covenant can be reduced.
- **Members of the PCC are asked to think of 10 suggestions that would help to reduce the deficit we face. It would be helpful if these can be emailed to Sherine and Gill during the next couple of weeks and therefore ready for discussion at the November meeting.**

Proposal: The Diocese should be approached to explain the current situation regarding the financial position of All Saints Church, in the hope that renegotiation may commence for Covenanting in 2024. In the meantime the PCC will regretfully have to suspend any further payments to the Diocese in 2023.

Proposed: Marion Goodman **Seconded:** Les Crowson

All members of the PCC in agreement

Thanks were expressed to Chris for the enormous amount of work he has undertaken for the PCC in the past year. There have been significant difficulties in resolving and formally accepting the accounts from 2020 and 2021.

Vicar's Briefing:

The period from now until Christmas is the busiest in the church year, not only with Harvest, Remembrance, All Souls, Advent and Christmas, but with school services, care home services and usually an increase in funerals. Alongside this we have some challenges as a church relating to our finances and the way in which we use the resources that we have.

A question was asked about when it may be suitable to hand out Friends information at services. It was agreed that such information might be given out after the All Souls service to members of the congregation but it should not be given to bereaved families at the time of funerals.

Harvest

William Stukeley had their Harvest service in school due to staff sickness being high; Holbeach Primary Academy are due to have their Harvest service in church on the 19th October. Donations have been sent to the food bank from WS and HPA are planning to make donations too.

All Souls

The invitation letter for All Souls will also include an invitation to our Blue Christmas service, offering 2 options for those who are grieving to attend at key points in the year. It is hoped that by including it in the letter (it wasn't last year), it may reach more people. Revd Barbara will be taking this service.

Advent/Christmas

With time moving on, Advent will soon be upon us. Services for all the schools have been organised, apart from UAH, who hope to find a date for a Year 7 Christingle service. It is proving to be a greater commitment than previous years as Holbeach Primary Academy is growing and they can no longer fit in the church all together, so 3 services have been arranged.

All the other services for that time are now planned and I intend to invite people from the community to take part in the readings for 9 lessons and carols again so that it can be a town service.

I am currently looking at possible Advent courses that we can run and in November will be taking names for the courses.

Junior Choir

This is a community champion with the Co-op from the 1st December through to March 2024, we are also planning to do some carol singing in December at the store in order to raise some additional funds.

Finances

I am hoping to have a meeting with Chris soon and look at putting together a small group specifically to look at finances and a way forward. As part of this a discussion around the cost of services needs to be had and forms part of our agenda for the PCC meeting.

See earlier report of this discussion.

Maintenance

Thank you to Roger, for all that he has been doing to look into water leaks and repairing the West Window. As part of our agenda, and linked to finances, we need to discuss the floodlights.

Christmas Tree Festival

Thanks go to Gill for taking on the running of this with her team. It is good to have so many people involved, and her support has enabled me more time to focus on ministry.

Leadership Course

I have begun the leadership course that Bishop Stephen nominated me for and asked me to do. I understand that there have been some concerns that I am a 'career priest' and more interested in promotion than being here. I would like to reiterate that I feel strongly called to be here in Holbeach. I am beginning this course with no aspirations apart from the benefit it will be both to my ministry and ability to lead All Saints. The focus of the course is on leading self, leading others and leading in the wider community, all of which I hope will be useful to All Saints. My commitment to All Saints and to the people of Holbeach is at the heart of my calling.

Bishop's meetings

I have a meeting with Bishop Stephen on the 5th October and Bishop Nicholas on the 9th October. I am hopeful that I shall have a bit more to share about those meetings once they have happened.

As reported under different headings of the Minutes these meetings had been positive and encouraging.

Floodlights; These have now been turned off, but anyway the timer switch is not working and there will be a cost to renew this. (see *Churchwarden's report*). The Parish Council is hoping that the floodlights will be on for the Town Christmas event and also the Tree will have lights. Various costs were considered but there is a lack of clarity about who pays for the Christmas lights and further investigation needs to be made about this issue. Tracey Carter (District Councillor) will give £400 from her budget and it is possible that other councillors may offer funding to help.

Payment for Organist: Sherine had had a meeting with Kim Biggs regarding how she is paid and the total cost to ensure that the musical traditions of the church are maintained.

Proposal: The PCC is happy to pay Kim (or any other organist when required) £40 per service and wish to express their gratitude for all Kim is giving in terms of her time and expertise.

All members of the PCC were in agreement.

The suggestion was made that Evensong services should be promoted across the Deanery, both in terms of congregations but also to any singers who may wish to join the choir for these services. As a Key Mission Church it would be good to promote our Junior Choir to all churches in the Deanery and membership is open to all young people from all parishes.

Safeguarding: Sherine stressed the importance of everyone being up to date with their Safeguarding training. There are no incidents to report.

Churchwarden's Report:

- 1) The repairs to replace the wiring and junction box for the toilet were carried out as arranged. Additional work was required at the time as the float in the chamber was found to be faulty when the new cabling and junction box were installed. This incurred a small additional cost for its replacement at the time but prevented a further call out charge being incurred.
- 2) There has been further ingress of water over the choir vestry and the lead outer lining gutter to the nave area above has been damaged by the high winds sustained last month. I arranged and met with Peter Slinger to inspect the south chancel roof abutment to the nave wall before instructing the lead worker to proceed with the works the PCC previously agreed to be undertaken and we have found further work that needs to be addressed at both the eastern and western ends insofar as the down-pipe over the organ pipes has a vertical split in it at the rear. The unfortunate coincidence is that the stone string-course above the flashing but below the down-pipe has been damaged at some point in the past, so instead of the water running down the wall and being thrown clear by the string-course, it is running into the top of the flashing and has eroded the mortar pointing above the flashing. In turn, it is suspected that the water is running behind the flashing and into the roof at that point. The first action is to make sure the down-pipe and its shoe are clear. The next thing is to repair or renew the downpipe. It is clearly fatigued on all of its corners and it may be better to re-make this section in new lead rather than attempt to weld it in situ. Thirdly, the best option would be to get a mason to replace the damaged stone of the string-course and the mortar joint holding the flashing so that any water is thrown clear. Failing this, the flashing needs to be wedged firmly into the stonework joint and pointed in lime mortar. At the same time to odd open joints in the mortar elsewhere on the clerestory string-course could be pointed. As a result I have had a further meeting on 6th October with the lead worker who is going to amend his quotation accordingly. He is also putting me in contact with a stone mason to address that aspect of the works and I will report further as soon as received.
- 3) The frequency of the gutter downpipe cleaning has been conveyed to Mick Boylan and these works will now be carried out in February, May, August and November commencing next month.
- 4) It is noted that the PCC voted for the floodlights to be turned off. These are now turned off; however, they have not been working, for an indeterminate period, as the timer has malfunctioned. If they are to be turned on again then we will need to arrange for an electrician to attend to the hard wired timer.
- 5) The suggested appointment of Linden Secker to service the boiler has been pursued; however, he is not qualified to service a gas boiler. It is arranged that Glenn Farrow will carry out the service shortly and he has agreed that the service cost will be the same as last year.
- 6) West window. I have arranged for surveys by the specialist companies to quote for the required works and the following is an extract from their respective quotations;

Devlin Plummer Stained Glass Ltd - Their estimated price to remove, conserve and reinstate all mainlights and traceries would be £42,500 plus VAT. Following their inspection on 27th September 2023, they confirm the shaped saddle bars are in good condition yet are showing early signs of spalling the stone face in a few instances. They recommend tipping these bars with stainless steel bar to help prolong the life of the stone. The estimated cost for these works would be £512 plus VAT. Their estimated price to remove, strip paint off, stove enamel and reinstall the external stainless steel guards would be £1,818 plus VAT. Their anticipated duration for the works is 13 weeks. They have also offered to arrange a conducted tour of their works in Norwich when the work is being carried out for any of us that are interested in viewing the process.

Castlebuild Scaffolding - Front Façade; Erect and dismantle independent scaffold 7.00m x 1.20m x 10.00m All boarded elevations, including netting, and tin sheets to base lift. Internal Scaffold; Erect and dismantle independent scaffold 7.00m x 1.20m x 8.00m (scaffold built from first floor) Access as discussed below window to allow full opening of the West door, and all elevations boarded. Total inclusive of all materials and labour £7,890.00 plus VAT. Total inclusive of 16 weeks hire per a week thereafter £345.00.

NB There is a matter that needs further investigation as it needs to be confirmed that the bell ringing platform is adequate to bear the weight of the internal scaffold. Castlebuild have allowed for screw jack props to support the platform from the ground floor however the Mary Bass ground floor is a raised construction and the ceiling is timber below a steel frame but I am questioning and investigating the viability of that method and am awaiting comment. *Roger is trying to get a revised quotation for the cost of the scaffolding.*

On a positive note and regarding the question of a Faculty being required for the proposed works I have been in contact with the DAC, Pastoral and Closed Churches Secretary who has in turn contacted the Clerk to the Diocesan Registrar at The Bishop of Lincoln's Registry, Westminster, London. As a result I am pleased to report that the Chancellor has indicated that he is happy to deal with this by way of a formal request to reinstate and extend the faculty that was granted in 2019. To meet their requirements I would respectfully request that a PCC resolution is recorded and separately issued confirming that the PCC want the works to be carried out now and that the PCC wish me to ask the Chancellor to reinstate and extend the original faculty. They are also requesting that I confirm the works are as originally intended and that I provide an up to date estimate of costs, alongside information about how much money we have available (i.e. the donations) and any outstanding amounts still to be raised (if any). This I can do and I have been in contact with Chris Penney and based on all of the above he has assisted by completing the Grant Application form to the Mary Bass Trust as far as possible for their October meeting.

The following Resolution has been passed on to Roger to ensure work on the West window can be carried out:

'On behalf of the PCC of All Saints Church Holbeach I confirm that at a PCC meeting held on 10th October 2023 it was proposed by Leslie Crowson, seconded by Jackie Sheldrake, and unanimously agreed that the PCC would like the repair works to the West window to be carried out now and that the PCC wish Roger Jennings, Church Warden, to ask the Chancellor to reinstate and extend the original faculty that was granted on 26 November 2019 in order that this work may proceed.'

Signed: Gillian N Graper

Name: Gill Graper

Position: Secretary

Funding for this project has been given in part by an anonymous donor and together with the funding requested from Mary Bass, it is hoped that the project will require no further funding from the Church. At this point suggestions were made regarding other funding streams for such projects eg Lincolnshire Churches Trust and several funding streams are mentioned in the Living Generously information packs compiled by the Diocese.

- 7) The Payaz machine appears to have completely failed now and I am attempting to contact the supplier to resolve the problem.

Thanks were expressed to Roger for the enormous amount of work he has been doing to investigate and resolve a number of maintenance and building issues.

A.O.B.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m. with prayers.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, 14th November, 7.30 p.m.