

The Vicar, the Reverend Steve Newbold, welcomed everyone to the meetings and thanked them for coming.

With 52 people in attendance, the proceedings were opened at 8:00pm. The Curate Sam Sanya read Isaiah 43 and members prayed.

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

This meeting opened at 8:00pm, chaired by Steve Newbold.

Steve began by noting some practical points for the meeting as it was held over zoom.

Steve offered thanks to Caroline Jamieson and Mary Ann Auckland for their service as churchwardens since the last meeting. They have both agreed to stand again for a further term. Steve expressed delight that they had agreed to stand again, for their skills, wisdom and insight and the practical things they have achieved.

Election of 2 Churchwardens

There were two nominations: Mary Ann Auckland and Caroline Jamieson

Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Caroline Jamieson	Fred Eaves	Sally Anniss
Mary Ann Auckland	Ann Toley	Morgen Edwards

There being no other nominations, Caroline and Mary Ann were declared elected for a one-year term.

This first meeting closed at 8:10pm.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Steve Newbold was Chair of this meeting which opened at 8:10pm.

1) Apologies

Apologies were received from the following members of the congregation: Mary Stratton, Jess Ely, Tim Edwards, Jane and Peter Devereux, Rachael Sanya and Ranmi Joshi.

2) Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 22nd October 2020

Proposal to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2020.

Proposed by Liz Cooper; Seconded by Dinos Horattides.

The meeting agreed unanimously. They were signed by the Vicar as an accurate record of that meeting.

3) Matters Arising

None.

4) Report of Electoral Roll Officer

(verbal update provided by Morgen Edwards, Electoral Roll Officer)

At the 2020 meeting the Electoral Roll was 200. After 4 removals and 5 additions our total was now 201.

5) Written Annual Church Report

The Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ending 31st December 2020 was received. The Annual Report is usually approved by the PCC, however that was not possible this year as the accounts had only just come back from the Independent Examiner. Therefore this meeting was asked to adopt the Annual Report. No questions or issues were raised.

Proposed by Jane Maffett, seconded by Linda Rivans and all agreed.

6) Report on Church Fabric, Goods and Ornaments

The Annual Report on the Church fabric, goods and ornaments, prepared by the Churchwardens, which had been approved at the last PCC meeting, was noted.

Caroline Jamieson said that the funds for replacing the paving in the car park are in place (from our existing reserves). The works are currently on hold as we have had an offer of external funding to redesign the front entrance of the church to make it more open and welcoming. The PCC had agreed to a feasibility study being carried out and a brief was being passed to the architects. More info will be made available when we have it.

Normal works were carried out and particular thanks to Chris and Helen Irwin-Childs for the work they had done in the back garden.

Proposed by Caroline Jamieson, seconded by Ike Odenigbo and all agreed.

7) Elections to the PCC

Steve thanked the Church Council, particularly those retiring: **Lucy Harding Anderson and Tina Yarrall.**

This year there were 3 full term vacancies and one 'casual' vacancy for a one year term. The following people were proposed as new members of the PCC:

Nominee	Proposer	Secunder
Sue Charlton	Enid Barron	Dinos Horattides
Ann Toley	Jane Maffett	Caroline Jamieson
Jon Yarrall	Rachael Sanya	Rob Yates
Alice Zhang (1 yr vacancy)	Susan Dixon	Andrew Dixon

There being no other nominations, Sue Charlton, Ann Toley, Jon Yarrall and Alice Zhang were declared elected.

8) Finance Report – Sanjay Joshi, Treasurer

2020

Overall Income was lower than expected due to the pandemic – planned giving was slightly lower than had been budgeted for but still came in at roughly £147,000. (Overall income was also significantly lower than the previous year but that was due to receiving some large legacies in 2019). Income from St Luke's Trust into the Restricted Fund came in at just over £40,000.

Despite the lower income received, we still managed to honour our tithe commitments to our mission partners. And we were able to raise appeal monies through new online giving methods, though still somewhat lower than previous years, due to the Church building being closed and not having the major services throughout the year where we receive lots of donations.

The main part of our expenditure is our Common Fund contribution. The diocese have been very grateful that we are still able to continue our planned contribution as many churches have not been able to. There was some unexpected spend for Zoom subscriptions, livestreaming and church maintenance/utilities however overall spending on most budget lines was lower.

So overall, with both income and spending being lower than expected, we managed to achieve a more or less balanced budget.

Our Designated reserves:

Maintenance Reserve Fund is just over £23,000.

Special Projects Fund is just under £36,000.

SJ expressed grateful thanks to the Giving Co-ordinators and the finance committee.

Proposal that the meeting adopt the accounts, signed off by the Independent Examiner.

Proposed by Sanjay Joshi, seconded by Ann Toley and all agreed.

b) Appointment of the Independent Examiner

We need to elect our independent examiner each year and our current examiner, Val Steward has agreed to hold this role again for the next 12 months.

Proposal that Valerie Steward continue as our Independent Examiner.

Proposed by Sanjay Joshi; Seconded by Jon Yarrall and agreed unanimously.

Steve Newbold expressed thanks to Sanjay for all his hard work. He has been our Treasurer for six years. Sanjay is willing to carry on as Treasurer.

9) Vicar's Report

- Steve started by thanking his clergy colleagues (Sam Sanya and Caroline Newbold) and the wider Leadership Team for all their help and support in the past year.
- He also thanked Morgen Edwards our Communications Manager and Children's Worker, Sanjay Joshi our Treasurer and Chris and Helen Irwin-Childs our Giving Coordinators for all their hard work.
- He thanked all those who have worked behind the scenes to enable public worship to continue and to the Parochial Church Council for their ongoing contribution.

- Steve stated that after a year of immense challenge we could now look forward with a sense of hope and begin to plan more, especially as we look towards the coming autumn.
- Various studies have shown that during the pandemic people have thought about faith more, have prayed more and have spoken positively about the way that Christians have served their communities.
- Alongside that, the way that people have engaged with church has been radically changed and is likely to remain different in the future.
- These factors influence the priorities that we have for the coming year – **Rebuilding Community, Being Online and Together and Grow and Deepen our Faith.**

Rebuilding community

- We need to rediscover the joy of meeting together again recognising that some will need more help and encouragement than others and it may take some time.
- Over the coming months we will slowly start gathering together more and as social distancing rules relax will hope to do more together both at church and in smaller groups.

Being Online and Together

- Effective online services look different from in person church - they have to be shorter, snappier and more varied. As we move forward we plan to continue to livestream one service every Sunday and that means reviewing what our 10.30am service will look like.
- Steve stated that he was extremely grateful to George Auckland and Andrew Whadcoat who have worked very hard to put in place the technology to enable us to livestream (funded from our reserves).
- As we begin to gather again at our second morning service from 6th June (11am for now, but returning to 10.30am in September) we will be able to join either in person or online.

Grow and deepen our faith.

- The past year has shaken us all and many of us have had dark days and times of struggle. It is our hope and faith in Jesus Christ and the encouragement of those around us that can keep us going.
- We now have over 100 people in different mid-week Connect Groups, and others who attend our People & Planet and TeaTimers gatherings. These have been vital places of support for many over this year and Steve thanked the Connect Group Leaders for their hard work in supporting and encouraging others and encouraged all to consider joining a Connect group and find a place of belonging and encouragement.

Steve also mentioned:

Website

- As well as improving our livestreaming capacity we have been making significant improvements to our website and encouraged everyone to sign up to the new Members only area where we can update our personal information and soon view an online directory.
- He also encouraged all to download the St Stephen's app to a smartphone.

Finance

- In 2020 our income fell but so did our expenditure and so we finished the year with a balanced budget.
- In 2021 things are looking less certain so Steve asked that if people haven't been able to give because they were unable to get to Church they try now to give if they can. He also invited those who are not yet regular donors to start doing so.

Environment

- Steve stated that St Stephen's had been awarded the Silver Eco Church Award at the beginning of the year which recognises the really significant efforts that have been made for us to become more environmentally aware as a community.
- We are now entering a new contract for green energy for both electricity and gas.
- Steve thanked Sue Charlton for her efforts in keeping us on track and encouraging us to do more and stated that we had now formally appointed her as our Eco Champion working with others across the Area.

Buildings

- Steve thanked all those who have worked hard in maintaining the Church building over the past year.
- He added that recently the PCC have been considering the possibility of upgrading the entrance to the church to create a more visible, brighter and welcoming space. This is at an early stage but if it goes ahead it would provide some more useable space, deal with the problems we have of a low rather oppressive ceiling, a flat roof in need of being replaced and clumsy doors that are difficult to open for those with buggies and people with disabilities.

- We are able to consider this because of a possible external grant which would pay for the works. More on this in the months ahead.

Staffing

- Beth Skelton left us unexpectedly at Easter. Having moved from Yorkshire to take up the post of Youth Pastor she was only able to do one month's face to face work before the various lockdowns and restrictions prevented more interaction. Caroline Newbold is again covering the role as we prepare to advertise for a new pastor.
- Jo Leeds, our Worship Pastor is currently on maternity leave and we continue to send Jo, David and Seth our love and assure them of our continued prayers.
- Sam Sanya will soon have completed his three-year curacy. Although we don't know for certain where or when he will be going, we can expect him to leave us over the summer months. Sam has been a great colleague to work with and will be greatly missed whenever it is that he moves on.
- Sadly Sam won't be replaced this summer and for the first time in 11 years we won't have a curate at St Stephen's.
- Steve concluded by saying that the past 15 months have been difficult for everyone and we as a Church community have many challenges to deal with. But he felt that we are in a good place and hoped that as we move forward we will all rediscover the joy of coming together again and look to God for all that has in store for us in the years ahead.

Any Other Business

Linda Rivans offered thanks to the clergy and the leadership team for forging on and making sure that the church continued to operate throughout the pandemic, maintain links with the community and reaching out to others.

Sam Sanya gave thanks to Steve for his leadership. He has kept us going with vision and guidance.

Jane Maffett offered an additional thank you to Caroline Newbold, Associate Vicar - she is not paid but gives an amazing lot to the church community and deserves her own thank you. Steve added that she is a great supporter and encourager.

Meeting closed with a prayer from Caroline Newbold at 8:55pm.

Signed as record..... Date.....