

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Nicholas Church, Sevenoaks held in the Undercroft of St Nicholas Church on Tuesday 23 April 2019

Present: The Rector and about 100 parishioners.

The Rector, Revd Angus MacLeay opened the meeting by advising all present that only those on the Electoral Roll were entitled to vote at the meeting.

1. The Minutes of the Annual Parochial Meeting held on 17 April 2018 had been duly on display at the back of Church and were unanimously approved and signed by the Rector. This was proposed by John Collett and seconded by Marion Russell.

2. Electoral Roll

A new electoral roll had been prepared which had predictably led to a reduction in numbers to 492 (2018: 712). The Rector thanked Lis Lidbetter, Electoral Roll Officer, for her continued hard work.

3. Election of PCC Members

Andrew Coates, Ian Leigh and Marion Russell had come to the end of their three years' service. Duly completed nomination forms had been received for Ian Leigh and Marion Russell. Andrew Coates was not standing for re-election and was thanked for his service on the PCC and for his and Jane's contributing contribution at 4 O'Clock Church. As there were 3 vacancies there was no need for a formal vote and both candidates were supported with a unanimous show of hands. One vacancy was unfilled.

4. Election of a new Deanery Synod member

The Rector expressed great thanks to David McIlroy who was shortly moving overseas. This led to a vacancy which was not filled.

5. Treasurer's Report

The Rector thanked Ian Leigh and the finance team for their hard work and diligence.

6. Receipt and adoption of the Audited Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2018

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Justin Greig, seconded by Sue Day and carried unanimously. The statutory Churchwarden's Report, Fabric and Furnishing Report and Deanery Synod Report could all be found in the meeting booklet.

7. Appointment of auditors for 2019

The re-appointment of Messrs Norman, Cox and Ashby was proposed by Noel Dawes, seconded by Alan Edwards and carried unanimously.

8. Annual Safeguarding Update

Rev Dr Gavin McGrath, Parish Safeguarding Officer, had produced the annual report on Safeguarding in the parish which was printed in the booklet. There were two procedural questions which were answered.

9. Approval of Leadership and Congregational Pastoral Teams

The teams were listed under item 9 and public ratification of the new teams was proposed by Ian Nash, seconded by Bill Salter and passed unanimously. The Rector expressed thanks to all those who had stepped down and prayed for the new teams.

Snapshot of church life

The Rector drew attention to the new posters on display and highlighted that they provide fuel for prayer and thanksgiving by giving insight into various ministries within the church. The posters would be on display in the church and at Lady Boswell's School for the Grace Church and 4 O'clock Church congregations.

Questions

In response to a question from Roger Russell about the nil balance on the Restricted Building Fund Ian Leigh, Treasurer explained that it was originally used for the Undercroft project and had not been formally closed.

Noel Dawes proposed that public thanks be given to Malcolm Pugh (as he would shortly be moving nearer family) for his dedication over many years across all 3 buildings used by the church with their technical set up. The Rector confirmed that both he and Tom Nash were planning to mark his final Sunday in an appropriate way.

Alan Bowen asked whether there was an update on the website and a new Day by Day. Sue Stimson, Operations Director, confirmed that developments such as incorporating the calendar and functionality to pay for events via the website were ongoing and that ChurchSuite would be used to produce a new online Day by Day prayer diary once sufficient members had given permission for their data to be included. She requested that all those present ensure that they had given due permission and uploaded a photo of themselves (if anyone requires help to do so, see Sue in the church office). Susan Barnes enquired about members who do not have computer or online access and it was confirmed that a hard copy would be made available. Phil Walker suggested that the request for updates could be made via the newssheet and Sue confirmed that this would be implemented in addition to explanatory emails which had already been sent.

10. Chairman's Address

The Rector referred to the recent After 8 on 31 March which had been held to provide ample opportunity for further explanation and discussion on the Sevenoaks Gospel Trust and its relationship with the PCC. He confirmed that he wanted to continue communication and that important discussions were ongoing.

The Rector then spoke about 3 areas:

Firstly, he drew attention to some of the particular pressures faced by ministry staff as they pour themselves out ministering *God's word* to *God's people* while acknowledging that it is all *God's work* which saves and the fruit of their labours is not always visible. This can lead to staff feeling particularly burdened and in light of 1 Thessalonians 2 he urged those present to honour, support and encourage the whole staff team, in particular during his forthcoming sabbatical.

Secondly, he reminded the meeting that he would be taking a sabbatical during June and July, mainly to write a new book on 2 Peter and Jude for the Proclamation Trust. He felt that 2 Peter and Jude were very apt for this day and hour with 2020 including the next Lambeth conference as well as publication of the Living in Love and Faith Report on human sexuality due to be presented to General Synod followed by their elections at the end of the year. He requested prayer for handling and applying the relevant scriptures.

Thirdly, he gave an insight into his prioritising focusing on Christ as a result of reflecting on Spurgeon's conversion and the resultant Take a closer look course which aims to encounter the Lord Jesus within every session and to then view other "topics" through the eyes of Jesus. He cited 2 Peter 3: 18.

He concluded by sharing an orchestral illustration. He reminded the meeting that we all quickly and easily become "out of tune" and that every Sunday it is the preachers' aim to serve and equip so that the church family is re-tuned and focusing on the risen Lord Jesus, ready to go out and proclaim the gospel.

Song "O Church arise"

Before leading the meeting in prayer Justin Greig and Ian Nash, Church Wardens, expressed deep gratitude on behalf of all congregations for the hard work and dedication of the entire staff team.

The Meeting closed with the Grace.