

Benefice of BCMU: *One Church PCC Meeting - Zoom*

A Community of Spiritual Disciples Leading our Benefice through Worshipful Working

MINUTES

Date: Monday 18th October 2021

Time: 7:30pm

Venue: Zoom

Who is Gathering

Roles	St Andrew	St Bartholomew	St Michael	Co-opted
Priest	Simon Lewis	✓		
Readers	Gene Joyner Nikki Burns (not yet co-opted to PCC therefore non-voting) ✓			
Churchwarden	Margaret Speirs ✓	Judith Longhurst ✓	Kate Reynolds ✓	
Churchwarden		Diana Coles ✓	Jonathan Reynolds ✓	
Deanery Synod	Penny Crawford ✓	Nigel Crocker ✓	Jean Lockett (late) joined for discussion agenda	
Deanery Synod	Helen Barnes ✓	Helen Fenn ✓		
Elected	Ben Wiggins ✓	Muriel Cole	Gill Durbin ✓	
Elected	Lynsey Hatherall	Gerald Coles ✓	Lucy Hemsley ✓	
Elected		Charlie Fenn	John Allen ✓	
Notetaker				Laura Williams ✓
Secretary			Sue Owst ✓	vacancy
Treasurer				vacancy
Total PCC	7	9	9	
Majority	4	5	5	
Quorum (1/3)	3	3	3	
Total at Meeting	5	6	7	
Quorum	Y	Y	Y	

7.30pm: We Gather in God's Name

1. Welcome

Chair

Apologies from Muriel Cole

2. Declaration of Quorum for each Parish

All PCCs Quorate (as above)

- *An evening prayer*

SL

7.40pm: We Celebrate Our Past

Chair

3. Communication and Correspondence - none

4. Approval of past Minutes

Corrections: St A/B/M - Correct Sue Owst not Sue Oust (LW: this has been corrected)

Proposed SL Seconded GD Approved unanimously

5. Matters arising

None

6. Progress updates from last meeting

Chair

b) Money matters (to be discussed in individual PCCs)

7:50pm: We Dwell in God's Word

SL

- *A prayer of Confession*
- *Lectio Divina:*

- *We explore and share the word of God - Scripture reading: Colossians 3:12-17*

8:00pm: We Present Our Offering

Chair

7. Consent Agenda

(none)

8. Discussion Agenda

i) Our contemplative culture and plans for St Hugh's

Nikki Burns

Nikki shared her vision for Contemplative Culture (please see separate paper sent out with minutes)

Helen Fenn: Thank you to Nikki. An inspiring vision which weaves into our Healthy Church priorities.

Do we have a programme of services?

NB: We have begun with a 5pm once a month. We would like to grow this - as much as people want. Nikki has cleared the outbuilding. It's such a beautiful space. Gentle steps.

John Allen: Can we afford St Hugh's. Would this be paid for by all the churches once we become one parish?

NB: God Provides. If we build a church, people will come. It is not huge but particularly suitable for gentle worship. We don't need to spend other people's money. It is a simple building but we would be looking for grants and a team of people to support this.

Penny: Thank you for sorting out the Outhouse. We will need to deal with the interior condensation and heating.

Lucy: Please could we open the space to outside groups?

NB: I very much hope so and I have been quietly mentioning to a few people who seem delighted by the idea

Penny: would you be able to use it in the winter?

NB: Most of our ideas lend themselves to the summer, like pilgrimages, but also should come into use in the winter.

Jean Lockett joined at 8:15pm: I've been listening to Nikki's presentation and it really moved me.

Nigel Crocker: There is a lovely opportunity for rewilding. Not just of the immediate wildlife, but also attracting people who are interested in God's creation - a rewilding retreat as well as Christian retreat.

NB: There is also star gazing, and eco church. I am looking forward to exploring all these aspects.

ii) **Open Forum about the new Parish Schedule** - how will our one parish be structured?

SL

The Parish Schedule proposed by the Diocese was sent out to PCC members prior to the meeting along with a covering letter by Simon Lewis

. If all are in agreement a resolution may be passed or may be deferred until the next meeting.

Comments: (Simon to pass those in red to Peter Evans)

Please correct the pronoun for the Bishop - his/her/their - so as not to assume a male bishop!

Correct the name of CM church to 'St Michael the Archangel'

Please add in the detail on the make-up of the PCC (inclusion of the 12 lay members)

'There will be 12 elected members, plus CWs, priests, readers and deanery synod'.

JReynolds: We need clarification of numbers and **mention of churchwarden measure within this document.**

Helen Fenn agreed that this is the bit that people will be interested in and we should not proceed without it.

There will be representatives from each congregation: **up to four from each parish church congregation + two church wardens for each parish church.**

SL: **We will put this in writing as an appendix**

PC: What is actually going to change. It almost seems that nothing is changing and it's becoming very confusing.

SL: We want to still designate our churches as Parish churches and not let them lose their status.

DC: How does this compare to Harptrees?

HB: Their churches may not all have Parish Church status

NC: We will have three parish churches of equal status within one parish

MS: When I read the proposal, I asked myself, Why are we doing this? And the reason is **Enhanced missional outreach.**

I asked, Is this going to work? If it isn't going to work this is all very scary. The idea of being a churchwarden of a much bigger parish is scary.

I looked at the research about what was happening in the rest of the Church of England. 1960 only 17% of CofE parishes were in multi-parish benefices. In 2011, it was already 71%; mostly rural.

The Church of England commissioned research to see whether numerical decline of worshipers had anything to do with amalgamation of parishes; the conclusion was, it didn't.

We are facing numerical decline of people worshiping in Church but actually if a particular church has various factors it can grow. Those factors are:

- Intentional focus on mission and growth
- A sense of purpose
- Good leadership
- Involvement by the congregations
- Willingness to reflect, review and adapt

We need to take a big breath, be willing to reflect, review, adapt, and go for growth, go for outreach, go for mission. We don't have many people willing to be churchwarden and treasures and that sort of thing but this Pastoral Scheme, streamlines us just a bit. It encourages us to work as a single body, so that we are working together, we can separate our duties out so that those interested in the buildings can actually look after them, and those interest in pastoral work can to pastoral work,

It does worry me a bit that the churchwardens can't amalgamate their duties, but there is an unfinished paper by the Church of England called the Reform and Renewal Programme, which is seeking to reduce the administrative burdens on parishes.

I say let us try and travel in faith, and get on with this.

NC: This scheme has been put together so that weddings, etc, and all offices of the Church of England can take place in all of our churches.

DC: Would it allow one CW to concentrate on the buildings and another to do the committee work?

SL: Yes

JLonghurst: The churchwardens already meet together every week and we meet as a PCC together. These are things that we are already doing and have been doing for a long time.

JAllen: If you took on being a CW for one parish church, is it possible that you could be asked to help in another church?

SL: Yes, this already happens. If a CW is away another offers to cover.

KR: Being a CW for one church is a big job and the idea of being a CW for more than one church would be overwhelming. It is such a lot of responsibility.

PC: It seems that at weddings in Blagdon, etc, the sides people are asked to help a lot. The church wardens from other churches have been helping but we should be using Blagdon people for Blagdon things.

LW - this gift of time from those who reside in other parishes was given so as not to overburden the very small numbers of people in Blagdon who help.

BW: We should be agreeing this document as a statement of intent.

JLockett: People are still very worried about money and how the finances will be organised. I have a duty to pass on these concerns from parishioners and I feel uncomfortable signing this legal document when I don't know the legal details of the financial arrangements.

Helen Fenn: We need a fuller picture to discuss in the hope that we could pass a resolution at the next meeting.

SL: I need the PCC to step up and debate and discuss and put their energies into how the new PCC will be structured.

J Longhurst and BW: the sticking point appears to be finance. If we could get that sorted out, other things would probably fall into place. We need another meeting to sort this out.

J Allen: What monies have been given so far already have a fixed purpose. It's important to be transparent in all future giving - for the one parish or for the building. People must be approached so they know what will be happening to their money.

SL: Let's not make a decision this evening. Let's all help and share and have input before the next meeting. It's really important that we all contribute so that we can get it right.

JR: *I think the document should be changed - referencing membership, CWs working across communities.*

HF: We could ask the Diocese to help us with a finance model for the new Parish.

BW: Happy to do this to help Simon out.

Judith Longhurst: typo noticed in the Parish Schedule document: "correct BMCU to BCMU"

9. Healthy Church - PCC members have been sent notes about the discussion that took place as part of September's PCC meeting. It was recommended that we, the PCC, meet in November to decide on actions suggested by the Healthy Church profile exercise that took place in July. No date was suggested at this meeting

8:30pm: We Give Thanks to God

SL

The Awareness Examen

- *We reflect back on our meeting*

8:35pm: Individual PCCs meet in break-out rooms for discussions

See next page for Minutes of individual PCCs

Minutes of St. Bartholomew's Parochial Church Council Meeting Monday 18th Oct 2021

Present: Judith Longhurst (JL, Church Warden), Diana Coles (DC, Church Warden), Gerald Coles (GC, elected member), Charles Fenn (CF, electoral roll officer), Helen Fenn (HF, Deanery Synod), Nigel Crocker (NC, Fabric, Deanery Synod)

Apologies: Muriel Cole (elected)

CC: Simon Lewis (SL, Rector), Laura Williams (LW, Benefice Administrator)

1) Finance update

JL had previously circulated a finance summary showing:

Current balance: £14,357

Estimated income through to year end: £3,820

Estimate of committed outgoings through to year end: £8,335

Giving current estimate of balance at year end: £9,842

2) Correspondence

The Churchwardens have received thanks from the three recipients of last year's charitable giving.

Action: CF to respond to the message from Msoro.

3) Fabric

- a. Nigel expressed thanks (on behalf of us all) to the volunteers of the churchyard working parties. The next one is scheduled for Jan, when the bank on the right hand side of the steps will be taken back to bare earth in preparation for sowing wild flowers.
- b. As part of the Eco Church initiative there is an expectation that bird nesting boxes, bird feeding stations and bat nesting boxes (for the four species of bats known to be present) will be installed in the churchyard in the spring.
Belated question from CF: would the PCC be happy if someone in the village wanted to set up a beehive in the churchyard?
- c. **Action:** NC will engage with George Chedburn (GC) to prepare a proposal for the renovation of the steps, probably with wider steps to make the ascent less steep. This would then be put out to tender with any quotes to be approved by the PCC before proceeding.
- d. **Action:** NC to also ask GC whether there has been any change in the advice about installing PV panels on church roofs. Previously the traditional solar panels were not allowed and the newer PV slate roof tiles were too expensive. What is the current advice on this, and are there any precedents of ground-mounted PV panels in churchyards?
(Churches have been doing this since 2012, eg:
<https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/news/solar-slates-for-grade-i-listed-church/>
Separately, CF has emailed Sara Emmett, Assistant Environment Officer at the diocese, for any advice or gotchas which she can share).
- e. **Action:** NC to engage with Ian Morgan to see if cost effective remedial work can be done on the current steps to make them safe until such time as they are remodelled. If not, we may need to close the steps and use the gravel path for the time being.
- f. NC confirmed that all the items from the last quinquennial review had either been actioned or had agreement to wait until after the next review.
- g. Hugh will set the bonfire alight once Colin has cut the churchyard hedge (so that trimmings could be added to the pyre).
- h. NC is still working to source (and, kindly, pay for) the anti-mold paint for the toilet.
CF is still on standby to apply the paint once sourced.

- i. JL gave notice of Christmas carols round the tree. The PCC will not be providing mulled wine due to covid concerns (but people could be encouraged to bring their own thermoses).
JL also gave notice of Christmas Day worship.
- j. DC gave an uplifting update on the early days of messy church.
HF shared that she had contacted Tony Cook from the Diocese "Go" team for advice on engaging teenagers.

4. We closed by sharing the Grace