

Hughenden Parochial Church Council

Minutes of Meeting - Thursday 3rd March 2022 at 7.30 pm in Church House

Present

Clergy: Keith Johnson, Helen Peters, Tracey Jones (TJ), David Tester
Churchwardens: Julia Grant, Frank Hawkins
Elected: Clare Godfrey, Mike Hill, Arthur Johnson, Brian Morley
Secretary: Susan Brice

1. Opening Worship

Keith opened with scripture from Ephesians 3 and Matthew 5 on which the new church vision is based.

2. Apologies

Antony Rippon, Ben Sharp, Christopher Tyrer

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2022

The minutes were approved without amendments.

4. Matters arising not on the agenda

Julia said that all the paperwork regarding the war graves had been sent off.

Frank told the PCC that it was hoped to have a special Sunday service to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The churchwardens and clergy will liaise and also consult the National Trust.

The author Nick Paige is a possible speaker for the October Parish Weekend.

5. Treasurer's Report (including Standing Committee)

Brian reported that the services income had increased as had the money from the yellow envelopes. The contactless income was also encouraging.

He told the committee that our developing partnership with the National Churches Trust was very positive. They had many ideas on ways in which we could market ourselves and indeed we already had relevant logos on the website.

Grateful thanks were noted to Richard Peters for the very considerable amount of time he had spent reporting back to the National Churches Trust.

Regarding the Belltower, Brian commented that the storm damage would have been severe if building work had not already been well underway by then.

A quote of £7,600 had been received for the restoration of Disraeli's grave and Heritage England will provide £6,000 of that amount. Total costs of all the current building works were put at £123,000 but Richard Peters is now estimating it will be £119,000 in all.

Derek Brown and Richard Peters are both to be thanked for their care and expertise in building techniques and for being able to keep costs to a minimum. The whole project should be completed by the end of June.

Brian went on to say that the state of the current account was fine and that cash flow was greatly improved. However, costs for oil and electricity were increasing significantly.

A proposal was put forward by Brian to increase the salaries of the verger, organist and administrator by 2%, backdated to the start of 2022. This was seconded by Mike Hill and the vote was unanimous.

Arthur suggested that the collection plate be abandoned and there was general agreement for this. Mike wanted there to be the occasional prayer for the monetary gifts and this too was noted. It was commented that we could not claim gift aid from contactless donations.

6. Planned Giving Review

David stated that we should increase our giving to reflect our own monetary good fortune. He said that the church should both model and inspire the generosity of giving, suggesting that it should be both committed and regular.

Having done some local research, David told the PCC that 5% was a common level of giving but that some churches were tithing 10%. This was from planned giving income.

A target of raising our planned giving to 10% to include a generous donation to St Peters Jaffa was put forward so that we would be in the forefront of giving and it was agreed that we wished to be a generous church.

Many thanks were offered to David for the clarity of his paper on mission giving. He then proposed that we adopt a level of 10% of planned giving, excluding legacies, grants and tax rebates. TJ seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

David also asked that the PCC give direct charitable support to Growing Hope, as it does to Love Wycombe and Lighthouse.

7. Vision Group Update

Keith told the committee that the group had met regularly and had consulted with both the church and the community. In the latter case there had been little response but it was felt that useful contacts had been made.

Anne Dean and Richard Peters had stepped down from the group which now consisted of 8 people. Keith said that new ideas had been forthcoming in the last couple of months and this had resulted in the Headlines for Vision which he circulated to the PCC, titled 'To know God's love, and to share his love with everyone'. Keith asked the committee to simply receive this document for the time being. He suggested a special meeting, early in May, when the document could be discussed.

It was commented that the Vision fitted well with the Mission Statement and it was hoped that the inclination of the PCC would be to accept the paper.

8. Belltower update

Keith reported that he and Richard Peters hosted the MP Rob Butler to an inspection of the work done on the Belltower. Keith then distributed photos.

As noted in the Finance Report, the project should be completed in late June.

9. Discipleship Training Centre

Keith reiterated from the previous minutes what had been said and considered about this scheme.

It was noted that there had been much additional pressure on Helen since Bex had left and Keith asked if it was felt we wanted to participate in this scheme in September. Helen said she had many reservations and felt that we did not have a sufficient level of staffing to undertake the mentoring, training and support of a young person in this situation. Keith suggested that we leave it for this year and said that the clergy would meet to discern the way forward.

10. Vicar's Matters

Keith asked that the PCC should consider the present committee and he circulated a suggested skills audit. TJ asked that pastoral skills should be added to the list and this was agreed.

Were the large number of vacancies a serious problem? Brian thought that as a smaller but unified group we were efficient and effective.

Some discussion took place about the requirements necessary to join the PCC and particularly as to how the term 'actual communicant' should be interpreted. No decision was arrived at.

Keith reported that a request had been made to place a memorial bench in the graveyard. After some questions and discussion, the PCC were all happy for this to take place.

'Fanning the flames of community' is a gathering with the Bishop, to reflect on the future of small rural churches, west of High Wycombe. Keith said that anyone who wished to attend would be welcome.

Reflecting on the desperate situation in Ukraine, different ways of offering help were discussed. It was agreed that money should be offered not clothes or foodstuffs. Frank and Brian said that here was our opportunity to model generosity and thus Frank proposed giving £1,000 to the appeal for Ukraine and a similar amount to Growing Hope. Brian seconded this motion and it was passed by the PCC with one abstention.

Keith said that the Mission Support Group are hoping to secure a guest speaker from Christian Aid for our morning services on Sunday 8th May. Lynn Watterston is currently pursuing this. This is one week before Christian Aid Week. Christian Aid envelopes will also be circulated to the church family well in advance of Christian Aid Week.

11. Churchwardens' Matters

Frank commented on the useful and interesting lighting demonstration that had taken place. A consolidated plan and costings would be available before the next PCC meeting in May.

It was noted that the church would need to be closed Monday to Friday for the work to be done.

Fire extinguishers on the site have either been serviced or replaced.

On the subject of Eco Church, Mike and Julia said that 2 or 3 other people were needed to form a small working party. It was suggested that a short series of sermons be given in the summer on the subject of creation, ecology and stewardship.

A meeting needs to take place between Keith, Arthur and Julia on the subject of various graves that are not conforming to the graveyard regulations.

12. PCC Subgroups

Nothing to report.

13. Policy Update

The Finance policy was adopted and the CCTV, social media and photos and images policy will be looked at during the next meeting.

It was agreed that policies would be reviewed every 3 years from now on except Safeguarding which is required to be reviewed annually.

Mike posed the question as to where the CCTV notices would be placed.

14. Parish Safeguarding

There is now a Safer Recruitment policy which as a church we are bound to follow. It is primarily concerned with how we gather volunteers. A working party needs to be set up to work through the ramifications of this policy. Roger and Keith have been meeting and working on a Safeguarding Checklist and the Articles of Enquiry.

15. Electoral Roll

Arthur reported that there are 169 members on the roll, with 5 new entrants.

16. PCC Meetings

A new list of dates of meetings was circulated for 2022 and 2023.

17. AOB

Mike talked about the PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) that he was prepared to do for the church. He will begin with items that belong to the church.

David closed the meeting in prayer at 9.50 pm.

ACTIONS

- **Clergy and Churchwardens to consider what form the Platinum Jubilee service should take.**
- **Keith to firm up the speaker for the Parish Weekend.**
- **Clergy to decide way forward in finding a new Children's Worker.**
- **Keith, Julia and Arthur to meet regarding graveyard regulations.**
- **Clergy to discuss series of sermons during the summer on creation, ecology and stewardship.**

Susan Brice (PCC Secretary)

4th March 2022