



Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council.

St Mary's Parish Centre

Thursday 29th September at 19:30

Present: In the Chair: Rhona Teale
Mary Bacon, Roger Burns (Secretary), Lee Castle, Maureen Dale, Jonathan Elvy, Brenda Hill, David Hollis, Ged Pugh, Monica Pugh, Arthur Watts, Janet Western

Meeting Started: 19:31

1. Opening Prayers

The meeting opened with prayers from Maureen.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 28th July 2022 were agreed unanimously as a correct record and signed off by Rhona.

3. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

4. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Keith Newby.

5. Lay Chair's Report (Rhona)

Rhona welcomed and thanked everyone for the continued support given to her and Maureen with all aspects of Church Life until a new Vicar is found. She thanked Steve and Maureen for attending Zoom vicar recruitment meetings on our behalf. We must continue to pray that the right person is called to serve us here on Walney and Barrow Island. Hopefully we are now seeing a light at the end of a very long tunnel with an Interview date of 7th October. Please continue to pray and I remind you that we will still opening the church at 9 am on Thursday October 6th.

She said BMS who are conducting the churchyard digital survey will be returning to church on October 13th to take some additional photographs to complete the survey.

6. Treasurers report (David)

David presented the YTD financial picture. All is going reasonably well. Nearly 83% of the Parish Offer is paid, only £5K to go. The Fabric fund has £1679 available and the Centre fund has just over £16k available. For General Funds, compared to last year, Stewardship income is up by £272, fund raising is up by £831, Halls income is up by £2802, fees are up by £200 but legacy gifts are down. Overall income increased by £4845. Church fabric income is down though upcoming work will be covered by donations. General Fund expenditure is up primarily due to higher oil prices. The overall £8k increase in expenditure should be expected as the church fully opens after lockdowns. Rhona thanked all donors for their support.

Our Parish Offer 2023-25 figures were submitted, St Marys were second best in terms of projected % increase in Parish Offers.



7. Churchwardens Report (Maureen)

Maureen said Since our last PCC meeting a Lay Led Service of the Word Joint Service was held at St. John's Church on July 31st.

Simon Jones, the newly appointed curate to the Mission Community came to St. Mary's Centre on 7th August to lead and preach at a Service of the Word. He was given a warm welcome and there was an opportunity to meet him over coffee afterwards.

We have had 8 Baptism Services, 1 Funeral Service and 2 Wedding Services, one on 13th August (Anna and George) and the second one on 3rd September (Kay and Michael). We have no more weddings booked for this year.

On 9th September a Coffee Morning was held in the Centre organised by Monica and the Girl Guides. The money raised was shared between the Guides and the Church.

On the 18th September we welcomed our Bishop, James who came to preside at a Service of Marriage Blessing, Baptism and Holy Communion. The Marriage Blessing was for John and Isabel (John who is now Lord Walney and was previously our MP for Barrow) and the baptism was for Jacob their two and a half year old child. It was a lovely time and the church family celebrated with John and Isabel, Jacob and Molly and with their family over coffee and cake in the Centre.

We continue to pray for a new Vicar and Church is open from 9.00-9.30am on Thursday mornings. The post was re-advertised and two candidates have applied. Please pray for those being interviewed and for the person God is calling to be the Vicar for St. Mary's and St. John's will be willing to come and serve in both parishes.

Our thanks go to all who help and support us to keep the church running smoothly, we do appreciate it.

8. Barrow Mission Community (Maureen)

Maureen said the Mission Community weekly Prayer Group took a break during August and recommenced on Wednesday, 7th September at St. Paul's Church. The aim is to pray for the people of Barrow in our churches, communities and town, to reach out in love and to share the good news of the gospel. The time of the meeting is 9.15-10.00am and meets at a different church venue each week.

Mary asked where BMC Prayer meeting dates and venues are advertised. **Maureen will follow up and come back with the source.**

9. Safeguarding (Rhona)

Rhona said Monica, Ged and Lee have completed their DBS and their Safeguarding Foundation course on line.

She reminded PCC Members to complete the Foundation Safeguarding on line and let her have the date completed. You need to go on Diocese of Carlisle Safeguarding training. Scroll Down to where it says Basic Awareness and Foundation training. Click on Church of England Safeguarding training portal You will then have to create an account.

10. PCC Sub-committee Reports

10.1 Buildings and Property.

This PCC Sub-committee met F2F in September. Work undertaken since the July PCC meeting includes:

- Following discussions and an exchange of emails with our MP, Simon Fell, then NW Ambulance undertook to review the **Adopt-A-Defibrillator** policy. A subsequent response from their Chief Executive stated their position hasn't changed and devices will be re-located if adoption not undertaken. PCC accepted then sub-committee recommendation to take no action at present and to monitor the situation
- **Church electrical works are planned to start next week.** Funding has been secured for the work to proceed. Andy Barnes will link with Maureen to ensure work does not disrupt church events.
- **Damp/leaks in the Centre toilets.** Damp-proof paint is proving effective in the ladies toilets. New flush control switch has been ordered for the gents toilets. A potential leaking pipe is also being investigated.
- We are seeing **increasing vandalism and disruption** to the Promenade shops and to our own church. Some vestry tiles were removed and 4 windows smashed. Arthur has made emergency repairs and has applied anti-vandal paint to the tops of drainpipes. Rhona and Roger are working with the Police and Shop Owners to agree measures we can take to address the situation on top of increased police patrols and raising public awareness through social media. We are meeting the police and shop owners on Monday afternoon to assess crime prevention options. We will come back to PCC if any concrete proposals impacting our purse or land are set out. PCC are requested to be vigilant and to report any live incidents to the police using "999".
- **Trees and shrubs are overhanging Church Lane** and may cause injury, It was agreed to wait until the leaves fall then assess the situation.
- The solicitor advised the **Annex Land Registration** is expected to complete in November. A request has been made to use the Annex for storage however the sub-committee felt that in its current state the building should not be used until such time it is sold. Estimates to remove a corrugated asbestos sheet and replace a doorway between the main hall and the annex and to also re-roof the scout gas store were received. Funding options are being assessed. **Roger to establish if parcelling up the diocese land with Annex, as originally required to satisfy planning permission for a dwelling, was still necessary.**
- The subcommittee agreed to the purchase of a **wheelbarrow and a soldering iron** for ground maintenance and repairs.

10.2 Communications and Connect

The team met via Zoom in September. The church website software was reinstalled this week and seems to address the intermittent display errors. We are getting about 5 hits a day on the website, our St Mary's Centre and Contact Us pages getting the most hits. The team will take the opportunity to promote the Centre through more photographs and testimonials. Roger is progressing the transfer of the Walney Monuments website to enable its display through the church website. ACNY continues to be well used with around 20 hits a day.

Our Facebook audience continues to grow with membership up to 369 members. The predominant age group is 25-44 and female. Postings/comments are relatively low in number though reactions/views are high. The most popular usage days are Wednesday



to Friday. Whilst contributions are welcome their language and tone should be suited to a Christian forum. We will look at ways to encourage a balance.

The team ask PCC to keep them informed of church events and activities such they can be publicised through our range of communications tools.

10.3 Worship Committee (Maureen).

Maureen said The Worship Committee prepared Lay Led Services of the Word for Sunday, 7th August and 4th September which were held in the Centre. These Services will now take place on the third Sunday of every month. They are well attended and there is a lovely feeling of church family coming together to worship and share in fellowship.

10.4 Baptism Committee (Maureen)

Maureen said we continue to have monthly Baptism Preparation Meetings with the families of those children coming for baptism which is a good opportunity to share with them the importance of the promises they will be making to God on behalf of the children. The baptisms take place at 2.30pm on the afternoons of the first and second Sunday of every month. We have large numbers who attend and we pray that they will want to come again and join with us in worship.

10.5 Social (Rhona)

Rhona said Monica has some further coffee mornings planned which need to be thought through. Harvest Supper is on October 11th. Rhona referred us to the Music Marathon item later in the Agenda.

11. Secretary Report (Roger)

A list of keyholders for the church and centre was compiled for tracking and security purposes. Cupboards in the centre were assigned location numbers.

Roger said he is liaising with Philip Brunskill to arrange a joint St Mary's/St John's PCC discussion with Vernon to discuss the Barrow Re-organisation. He will be talking to other PCCs in the area too. PCC chose Tuesday 25th October in the evening from 7pm onwards to accommodate those working to attend.

12. Any Other Urgent Business

12.1 Music Marathon (Rhona)

Rhona said letters have gone out and bookings received. PCC members took letters to target some additional groups. The event will be held on Saturday 18th February.

12.2 Use of loop system in the Parish Centre (Mary)

Mary has spoken to various members of our congregation who all report that the new microphone has helped them to hear the services in the centre. At the moment it seems a loop system would not lead to an improvement as it would not help with the problem of ambient noise during times when having general conversation. Not all have aids which could be blue-toothed but again such a system would have to be linked to the sound system. Mary recommended we leave things as they are as the new mic has helped. It would cost about £1000 to put a loop in but it would not make a significant difference. PCC agreed with Mary's recommendation.



12.3 Christingle Arrangements (Maureen)

Maureen said Worship had looked at dates and 18th December was best suited with a 1600 start.

12.4 Reader Sponsorship (Jonathan)

Jonathan said he needs PCC to sponsor his Reader license. It is the quinquennial renewal next year for all readers. PCC unanimously approved to continue its sponsorship of Jonathan in his Reader role.

12.5 “The Peace”

Jonathan asked if it was timely to allow the congregation to move round the church during the Sunday service to exchange the Peace. PCC agreed **Maureen would ask the congregation to vote on this at the next service held in the Centre.**

13. Next PCC Meeting Date

Scheduled for Thursday 24th November at 19:30 in the Parish Centre.

14. Closing Prayers

Mary closed the meeting with prayers.

Meeting Finished: 21:05