

THE PARISH OF CENTRAL EXETER

**Minutes for the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council  
Held via Email and Zoom at 7pm on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

**Present via Zoom:** Keith Walton (chair), Sue Blow, Jessica Claridge, Richard Skinner, Betsy Allen, Sheila Swarbrick, Claire Mayer, Don Branton and Mary Keaney (sec)

1. The PCC agreed that because of the Coronavirus emergency the meeting would be conducted by means of online correspondence and a Zoom meeting.

Keith welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Apologies:** Viv Asher, Helen Evans and Celia Smith

2. **Prayer:** Sheila read the following prayer.

Keep us good Lord

Under the shadow of your mercy

In this time of uncertainty and distress.

Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,

And lift up all who are brought low;

That we may rejoice in your comfort

Knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen

3. **Minutes of the Zoom meeting on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020:**

Richard suggested that the wording at point 10.7 should read that new PCC members are not only eligible but 'strongly advised' to have a DBS check. The minutes have been amended.

*Post Meeting Update: The Diocesan guidance recommends that PCCs should be moving towards DBS checks for **all** PCC members (both existing and newly elected members) as it is likely to Church of England will require DBS checks for all PCC members.*

The minutes were agreed and will be signed when we are able to meet.

4. **Matters Arising/Questions:** No matters arising.

5. **Parish Activities:**

5.1 **Pastoral Care:** unminuted

5.2 **Pattern of services and church opening hours update.** Thanks to Claire for organising cards and posies which are to be presented to the three retiring flower arrangers during the service on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December.

Bee's Meditation and Music event on 4<sup>th</sup> November raised approx. £70 for Exeter Community Initiatives.

Jim, our caretaker, will be opening St Stephen's, St Pancras' and St Martin's on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings (10am to 12noon) from Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December. He is keeping a record of the number of people visiting St Stephen's.

**Services:** The pattern is have one live service in a church each week although this pattern is interrupted over the festive period. This pattern will continue in February and March 2021 with Zoom and prepared material available.

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December:** 8am in St Pancras'

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December:** 12noon in St Pancras'

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December:** 9.30am in St Olave's

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December (Christmas Day):** 10am in St Stephen's

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December:** NO SERVICE

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January:** 10.30am in St Stephen's

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January:** 8am in St Pancras'

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January:** 10.30am in St Stephen's

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January:** 9.30am in St Olave's

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> January:** 10.30am in St Stephen's

**Advent Talks:** Chris Bryan has offered to have a discussion about his advent talks via Zoom on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 5pm.

**Action:** Sheila to schedule a Zoom meeting for this.

**Action:** Mary to re-send information about this to parish with Sheila's updates.

**Music and Meditation:** Bee Harley with the harpist, Matilda Whates and Sheila will be hosting this Christmas event on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December in St Stephen's at 2.30pm with proceeds going to St Petrock's Homelessness Centre and Lifting Hands International.

## 6. Church Buildings:

### 6.1 St Stephen's:

**Orthodox church monthly service:** The Holy Prophet Elias Orthodox Parish will be using St Stephen's on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December and Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January. They are currently completing a risk assessment and booking forms. Sheila has communicated with the archdeacon about this.

**Garden:** Betsy has been weeding and planting a range of plants in the garden but is aware of the need for some hard pruning of old shrubs. She has met with a gardener willing to prune, treat the soil and remove debris as necessary for £450. After a discussion the PCC gave approval for the work to go ahead with funds coming from the Ernest Brooks Trust.

**Action:** Betsy to contact the gardener to give an instruction to do the work.

**Notice board:** Don reported that the middle notice board outside the church has suffered a couple of acts of vandalism. Don has replaced the toughened glass with ordinary glass. Approval was given to Don who will put in some toughened glass in the cabinet in the New Year as this is safer.

**Action:** Don to replace the glass

**Lockdown Quilt:** This was created during the first lockdown in March and is being exhibited around the country. It will be in St Stephen's from Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and any donations will go to Refuge, a Domestic Abuse charity. There will be no charge for this exhibition. Cathie Holden, the organiser, will be speaking with local media and organising a rota of volunteers to be stewards.

**6.2 St Petrock's:** £800+ VAT has been reclaimed re: drainage works last summer

**6.3 St Pancras':** Nothing to report

### 6.4 St Olave's:

**Refurbishment progress:** The electrician will complete works next January or February.

**Morwena Stephens and banner update:** Options are being considered with regard to putting UV glass in the windows to protect the banner and recently restored paintings on sunny days. Russ Palmer, the architect, is looking at costs.

7. **Social Media Update:** Helen has updated Facebook with the latest church opening times and details of the Music and Meditation event on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December.

8. **Deanery Synod Report:** The meeting on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October held via Zoom was attended by Sheila and Jessica. The Archdeacon, Andrew Beane, spoke of his life and the move to Exeter and Lockdown.

## 9. Finance:

9.1 **Budget for 2021:** Sheila, via shared screen, talked us through the Budget prepared by Sean, our treasurer. Planned giving has remained constant but the use of PCC property/fundraising have generated little income. Some monies will be paid in soon including an amount from the Churches Conservation Trust and the VAT reclaimed from work conducted on St Petrock's drains. Under Expenses it was noted that the 'upkeep of services' has been low but utilities were surprisingly high. The Diocesan share is estimated to be lower next year. It was agreed that the flower arrangers cost should be put under 'upkeep of services'. Looking forward it is hoped that the income will be better in 2021 as use of the property/fundraising activities increase as the Covid-19 restrictions lessen.

Thanks were given to the congregation for their continued giving.

9.2 **Online giving:** Mary reported that a 'Donate' link could be set up on the website via Parish Buying with a 2% commission per transaction but if it proved popular Dancing Badger could set up an E-commerce portal at a cost of a few hundred pounds.

**Action:** Mary to set up link with Campaigns for St Olave's, St Stephen's, Inner room and General. **Action:** Mary to harvest statistics on who looks at website.

## 10. Safeguarding and Health & Safety:

**10.1 Safeguarding Report:** Mary, our safeguarding officer, summarised the report which was approved. Some PCC members need to refresh their CO training in 2021 and details of a safeguarding concern which has been passed to the diocesan Safeguarding team.

**Action:** Mary to circulate instructions to all PCC members who need to refresh their CO training in the early part of 2021.

## 11. CTAX/CTCE:

**11.1 Celebrate Together:** Sheila informed us that the Exeter Mencap and Celebrate Together Carol Service is being offered as an online video recorded at South Street Baptist Church.

**Action:** Mary to share link with the parish for the carol service

**11.2 Amanda Harper:** Sheila asked us to hold Amanda Harper, minister at Southernhay URC, in our prayers. Amanda died on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November after a short illness.

**11.3 United Service:** Sheila talked about a possible United Service in January. South Street Baptist church are happy to record a morning service with people from the various churches contributing readings and music.

**11.4 Cathedral Zoom service:** Chris Palmer will host an ecumenical service on Sunday 17 January.

**11.5 Lent Courses 2021:** The diocese is preparing a Lent course to reflect theologically on the pandemic. These will be conducted by Zoom if necessary.

12. **ECCC:** Sheila had sent a letter to colleagues in ECCC to say that with so little active chaplaincy possible in 2020 there was no need for church donations in 2020 or 2021. See attachment

13. **CMS link:** Sheila reported that she had just received the latest letter from Ruth Sayers in Plymouth. The parish will continue to support Ruth while John Bosco's 6 year term has come to an end.

**Action:** Mary to circulate the link letter to the parish

## 14. Correspondence:

**14.1** A letter from Exeter City Council requesting us to identify potential sites for building.

**14.2 Comfort and Joy:** The Archbishops have readings and reflections for the 12 days of Christmas and the national advertising for Christmas services under this title.

## 15. A.O.B.

**15.1 Fundraising:** A discussion was held to determine how we could raise some funds by selling the preserves made by members of the parish. They could be sold at the end of Sunday services or virtually via email.

**Action:** Betsy to find out how many preserves are available before a decision is made.

**15.2 Inner Room:** Helen began Phase 2 in November with 3 writing workshop groups. The experimental Room2Write writing sessions were well received and are being continued for the rest of Phase 2. There are 2 events planned for the Christmas reading Room on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December. Helen will offer tutorials to workshop participants. Planning for Phase 3 will begin in January for a February start (Lent to Easter).

**15.3 Cards for Good Causes Charity:** Charity cards are available from the shop in Paris Street as St Martin's was unavailable.

16. **Date and Place of future meetings: Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021** with the APCM on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Sheila closed the meeting at 8.30pm with a night prayer for Advent.