

THE PARISH OF CENTRAL EXETER

**Minutes for the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
Held via Email and Zoom at 7.30pm on Wednesday 17th March 2021**

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

1. The PCC agreed that because of the Coronavirus emergency the meeting would be conducted via a Zoom meeting.
Keith welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Apologies: Celia Smith
2. **Prayer:** Sheila read an evening prayer for Lent
3. **Minutes of the Zoom meeting on Wednesday 9th December 2020 and the Extra Ordinary Meeting held via email on Monday 1st February 2021:**
The minutes for both meetings were accepted as accurate records. They will be signed when we are able to meet.
4. **Matters Arising:** No matters arising.
5. **Parish Activities:**
 - 5.1 **Pastoral Care:** unminuted
 - 5.2 **Pattern of services and church opening hours update.**

Services: There has been a change in the proposed services due to the St Stephen's ceiling repairs and the January lockdown. The parish churches have been closed for private prayer and reflection with the postponement of the Lockdown Quilt Exhibition.

Holy Week Plans: Cathedral services, Lent talks and Good Friday prayer at 7pm via Zoom

Action: Mary to circulate links to parish re: Cathedral services and Good Friday prayers

Sunday 4th April (Easter Sunday): possibly to be held in St Martin's

Post Meeting Update: confirmation that ceiling repairs will be completed so St Stephen's can be used from Sunday 18th April

From 18th April the parish will continue with one Holy Communion service each Sunday with prepared material being circulated with Sunday Zoom meetings. Meeting Point will possibly resume in the Autumn with prepared material circulated on alternate Sundays with people able to attend St Stephen's every other Sunday. Keith noted that he was happy to continue providing the Night Prayer material on the first and third Sundays when services are held in St Stephen's and provide the full service and Night prayer on the second and fourth Sundays.

Thanks were extended to Keith for his work compiling the service materials each week.

Sunday 25th April: Chris Bryan to take the service in St Olave's at 9.30am (Sheila away)

Sunday 30th May: (fifth Sunday) BCP Communion in St Martin's at 10.30am with Peter Beacham

Sunday 29th August: St Mary Arches TBC

Sunday 3rd October: Harvest service in St Petrock's TBC

After Easter the midweek communion service in St Pancras to be moved to Thursdays at noon, twice a month. The Cathedral currently holds Wednesday lunchtime communion.

Orthodox churches: Robert Plant and the Community of St Pancras of Rome currently use St Pancras once a month. The Orthodox Parish of the Holy Prophet Elias from St Ann's chapel have booked several Saturdays in the Spring and the Romanian Orthodox Community also wish to use St Stephen's. They have booked a few Sundays for their services but have been unable to use the church due to the ceiling repairs. We hope to offer them the use of St Olave's once refurbishment works are complete.

Post Meeting Update: *The Orthodox Parish of the Holy Prophet Elias have cancelled their bookings as they have made the decision to use St James' hall for their worship. They have made a small donation in thanks for their use of the church and warm welcome.*

Reopening of St Stephen's and St Pancras: Possibly reopen from 12th April with Jim P (caretaker) in attendance.

Post Meeting Update: *Ceiling repairs will be complete by Sunday 18th April so churches can reopen from 19th April. Christian Aid exhibition planned for May in St Stephen's with St Petrock's reopening later in the year.*

Easter Adventure: Jessica Hodges from St Matthew's has asked if she can display posters in St Stephen's as part of the Rocket Hunt they are planning around Exeter. Children will be tasked with finding clues for bible verses on posters in noticeboards/windows in the city centre.

Lockdown Quilt Exhibition: This has been booked for Thursday 3rd to Sunday 6th June 2021.

Music and Meditation: Bee Harley and Sheila hope to host this event sometime in May or June with proceeds going to charity.

Post Meeting Update: *suggested date Thursday 13th May at 1pm*

Summer concerts: Discussion about whether to proceed with 2 or 4 concerts in July or possibly September. This is all under the proviso that restrictions are lifted.

Action: *Jessica to begin approaching musicians to perform at the concerts.*

Post Meeting Update: *One performer provisionally booked for final Thursday in July.*

St Stephen's bookings: The PCC agreed that Mary could begin taking bookings for events in St Stephen's from July with caveats in place should restrictions not be lifted.

Eco-church: General Synod agreed in February 20 to aim for a big reduction in carbon consumption by the church by 2030. This is a matter for us as individuals and as a parish to consider. Eco-church is a way to help us to do this. We had hoped to have a talk by Alastair McIntosh in April 20. Sheila will contact Tim Gorringe to see if this can be rearranged and she will invite Martyn Goss to preach.

Living in Love and Faith: The Church of England want a discussion this year focusing on the Christian teaching about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. Parishes are encouraged to use the videos and discussion material that is available on a website.

Parish Social: Ham Wall

Helen Evans hopes to lead a parish expedition to RSPB Ham Wall, near Glastonbury, in either November or January to see the starling murmurations. This trip would be totally dependent on restrictions being lifted to allow travel and group visits. It was thought wise to have a Plan B (visit to Topsham) in place should this trip not be able to go ahead.

5.3 Greeters:

With the beginning of possible new bookings from July onwards Mary raised concerns about the current numbers of available Greeters especially with the recent retirement of Bob Snowden. Claire expressed an interest in joining the Greeting team.

Action: *Mary to contact all current Greeters to ascertain whether they are happy to continue in the role and to begin recruiting new Greeters. Mary to send Claire some information re: the role.*

6. Church Buildings:

6.1 St Stephen's:

Key for St Stephen's flower arrangers: A new key has been given to Jenny Crossland.

Garden: Betsy organised a de-clutter of the garden before Christmas and would now like to have some new ground plants to add colour and cover.

Action: *Betsy to contact parish with a plant request.*

Notice board: Don is to put toughened glass in the vandalised display cabinet.

Action: *Don to replace the glass when possible.*

St Stephen's ceiling: Don updated us with the information that the repair is complete but the lime plaster used before decoration takes several weeks to cure hence the delay in reopening the church. There may also be further work required in the ceiling to strengthen the joists.

Sheila is to see Tim Bucknall (builder) in St Olave's on 18th March for an update. Tim will send a quote for the extra work. The St Stephen's Project funds will pay for the repairs.

6.2 St Petrock's:

Tower door: Don reported that Jim Pilkington (caretaker) and Ryan Brodie (Tower Captain) are planning to repair the door and remove all the pigeon excrement that has accumulated on the bells due to the tower door blowing open earlier in the year. The door itself has suffered water damage and was unable to close securely. It was discussed whether it was appropriate to offer the Jim and Ryan a reward for their efforts.

Post Meeting Update: *Jim, Ryan and a couple of volunteers will clean the bells with no expectation of payment.*

6.3 **St Pancras':** Don replaced the front door lock and has some spare keys.

Action: *Don to give Betsy and Keith new keys.*

6.4 St Olave's:

Refurbishment progress: Tim Bucknall (builder) is finding it a challenge to find an electrician to commit to completing the work.

Banner update: Kevin Jones is working on the banner frame adding glass which gives a level of UV protection.

Vestry: Clearing work continues. Suggestion about offering copes and other vestments to other churches or sell/give away. Sheila will check with Archdeacon Andrew Beane if this is possible.

7. **Social Media Update:** Helen regularly updates Facebook with the latest church services and/or opening times and will post The National Day of Reflection, Tuesday 23rd March, information and materials include a minute silence at 12noon.

Action: *Mary to send Marie Curie/Day of Reflection link to Helen.*

Holy Ground: An online 'Resurrection Now' gathering with the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, will take place on Sunday 11th April 2021 at 6pm. Places can be booked via the Cathedral website.

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

8. **Deanery Synod Report:** Next meeting in April 2021

9. Finance:

9.1 **Annual Report and Financial Statement 2020:** Sheila screen shared the figures for 2020. Thanks were extended to Keith for a beautifully written report reflecting the unprecedented events of 2020. Thanks and admiration were also extended to Sean Swarbrick, treasurer, for all his hard work compiling the accounts. The meeting approved the report and accounts.

Action: *Keith to send the updated Financial Statement with the Independent Examiner's Certificate when available.*

Post Meeting Update: *Simon Gay, our IE, is currently poorly so we will update records as soon as possible.*

9.2 **Budget for 2021:** This was agreed at the December 2020 meeting.

9.3 **Online Giving:** Mary reported that a 'Donate' link had been set up on the parish website in January 2021. Donations for Inner Room have been coming in over January - March. Thanks extended to Mary for her work on this.

Action: *Mary and Helen to discuss the use of QR codes to give money re: events.*

10. Safeguarding and Health & Safety:

10.1 Safeguarding Report: Mary talked through the issues in the report. The parish is now at Level 2 on the Safeguarding Action Plan. The PCC agreed to display the notice adopting the 'Promoting a safer church' policy statement in our churches. It was also agreed to purchase the Safeguarding mini guides and contact cards for member of the PCC. The Action Plan can be viewed on the Dashboard via invitation.

A discussion around the new Tower Captain, Ryan Brodie, was held with regard to safer recruitment. Helen's Zoom protocols were adopted for parish Zoom meetings. These will be reviewed regularly.

Action: Mary to purchase mini guides and contact cards from Church House Publishing.

Post Meeting Update: Sheila has spoken with Ryan Brodie who clarified his position as Tower Captain of the St Petrock's Bell Ringing Centre which does not have a current bell ringing team although he books and welcomes visiting teams. Ryan is happy to complete a Risk Assessment for the parish when bell ringing can resume and teams wish to visit. When the Exeter Cathedral School book bell ringing session these are led by a teacher from the school with a member of the Heavitree bell ringing team.

11. CTAX/CTCE: CTCE United service using CTBI material was available via South Street Baptist Youtube and live Zoom service hosted by Chris Palmer at the Cathedral. Both services featured various readers and music from different churches. Sheila has led 2 small ecumenical Lent groups using the diocesan material while others have joined a Lent silence on Friday afternoons led by Belinda Speed-Andrews from St David's. Short daily prayer videos were available in January from different churches and this will be repeated for Holy Week and Easter.

12. ECCC: No news. Please continue to pray regularly for the city centre and await reopening of shops and businesses. Norman Wallwork is due to retire soon as this was postponed from last summer.

13. CMS link:

Ruth Sayers sent this report from Devonport -

a) Work Club - we are planning how we can open and when that is likely to be. It is going to be awhile before we can open in any form. Alison our Coordinator has been running a phone service for those we have kept in touch with but of course those who may really need us now may not know we even exist. We will have to do a publicity program when we have a plan. Praise God we now have sufficient funding to keep going for at least 18 months and enough to operate for 2 days a week if we are able.

b) I have been able to keep in touch with my supporting churches and have been offered a few preaching opportunities. Looking forward to visiting on behalf of CMS hopefully by the end of the year.

c) Praise God for zoom. I have been able to keep in touch with my family during this time, even my brother who lives in San Francisco and my cousins who are in Germany.

d) As part of the chaplaincy work at City College (a local college of FE), on request, we have formed a support group for students who have been bereaved. Any student can have a one-to-one session and know that there is a phone number they can call.

14. Correspondence:

Post Meeting update: Sheila has received a letter from Bishop Robert thanking the parish for our share of the Common Fund in 2020.

15. A.O.B.

15.1 CERN: Beryl Whidden was approved as a trustee to replace Cath Dobson when she retires from CERN in April

Action: To buy cards/gifts for Cath Dobson and Bob Snowden who is also retiring as trustee.

15.2 ECI Annual Review Meeting 2019-20: To be held on Wednesday 24th March at 5.30pm via Zoom

15.3 Inner Room: A planning meeting will take place in April

16. Date and Place of future meetings:

The APCM is on Wednesday 14th April 2021 via Zoom at 4pm.

Wednesday 16th June; Wednesday 29th September and Wednesday 8th December.

Sheila closed the meeting at 9.20pm with a night prayer blessing.