

The Parish of St Mary-the-Virgin, Wivenhoe
PCC Meeting on Tuesday 8th September 2020, 7.30pm via Zoom

<p>Welcome & opening prayer: Erwin opened the meeting with a prayer suitable for the beginning of the PCC meeting praying that discussions and decisions may reflect God's will. Erwin then welcomed Revd. Dr. Sara Batts-Neale and Dr. Elisabeth Ring to the meeting and the parish.</p>
<p>Those present: Rev Erwin Lammens; Peter Terry; Douglas McCormick; Bill Eborn; Greg Butler; Heather Edwards; Graham Wadley; Marika Footring; Graeme Martin; Glyn Stanway; Rick Cawley; Scott Danielsen; Bonnie Hill; Deirdre Gill; Revd. Dr. Sara Batts-Neale; Dr. Elisabeth Ring; Margaret Bigwood</p>
<p>Apologies: Jane Taylor; El Newman; Angelique Basson;</p>
<p>Conflict of Interest – Bonnie Hill – Transformation Project Minute 2020\53</p>
<p>Briefing Sheets: It was proposed by the PCC Secretary that the remaining 10 weekly briefing sheets (dated 26th June – 4th September 2020) be added to the September PCC minutes as an addendum. This was seconded by Marika Footring and approved unanimously. Bonnie was thanked for producing the briefing sheets and it was decided that these should now cease as the normal pattern of PCC meetings were being reintroduced.</p>
<p>Minutes of the PCC meeting held on the 22nd June 2020 were approved.</p>
<p>Minute 2020\51 Matters arising from the PCC Minutes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. El is still waiting for copies of Safeguarding Course Certificates to be sent to her. 2. Vacancies – A new vacancy had arisen and had been filled – Tidings Distribution Co-ordinator. Roy Murchie wished to step down and Greg Butler had volunteered to take over in 2021. There were two other volunteering opportunities – Fundraising Co-ordinator and Catering Team leader. The PCC had been asked for recommendations at the last meeting, unfortunately there were no names put forward.
<p>Minute 2020\52 Correspondence: The CCLI invoice (music licence etc.) had arrived which amounted to £526 for the year. The licence will be renewed when we start to use it again. We have five licences in total for various elements. Bill said that although it was an expense he was keen to ensure that we had the necessary licences to cover what was necessary to enhance the current services; the cost was included in this year's budget. Marika and Erwin will decide what to renew and what is not required at this moment in time.</p>
<p>Minute 2020\53 The Transformation Project</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Annexe: Graham Wadley had provided information which was included within briefing sheet 24. Graham asked if there were any questions arising from the report that had been published. Bill was concerned about the possibility of remains being exhumed and that if there were they would be taken to Colchester Cemetery to be interred. He also asked why the archaeology investigation did not take place at an earlier point in the project. Graham said that the remains issue would be looked into further as it had been a recent discovery and as to the timing of the survey the advice that was received was to leave it to this stage in the project. Bill understood that these were shallow graves and if they turned out to be plague graves would it be safe to exhume them - no indication that they were plague graves but they were 16th or 17th century discoveries so far. By redesigning the base it is hoped to reduce the number of graves which are disturbed, the difficulty is at the eastern end of the annexe. The previous Archdeacon had provide advice and guidance and the remains would of course be treated with respect. Graham said the contractor was very close to being able to release the final cost of the project. £30,000 may have been saved by the recent evaluation process and he had three issues that he wished to spend additional money on. The design of the slab – to finalise the slab with a structural engineer £750+vat; work with the Colchester Borough Council for excavations £280+vat; a written statement from the Colchester Archaeological Trust £150+vat making a total of £1,180 +vat. A question was raised about new work on the slab – it was explained that the additional work was required in order to minimise the number of graves being disturbed; reduce the impact on the archaeology and maximise the slab base. The payment to the engineer would ensure that the planning department would not need to be asked for additional permission. A figure of £25,000 for fees was mentioned but that was not required at this time – when the final figures are disclosed this would be included in the amount required for the project. Graham Wadley proposed that spending of £1180+vat be approved – details contained above. Bill Eborn seconded the proposal and this was agreed by 16 members with one abstention. b) Appeal Given the Covid-19 lockdown, we have not had a meeting since February and, with no news about costs, there has been no reason to have one.

Helpful discussions with an advisor at the National Heritage Lottery Fund about how to structure a grant application suggested that we emphasize the history of the church and how best to promote it, and also to clearly state the benefits to the wider community of Wivenhoe of the Transformation Project, were brought to an abrupt end with the Covid-19 pandemic earlier this year when we were told that the NHLF would only consider applications for grants that were Covid 19 related. That is, projects directly impacted by the Covid 19 virus or which would alleviate the problems caused by the virus. Therefore we are in limbo on that front for the time being.

Peter Terry has been leading a small team applying for grants from other 'church-friendly' grant-making trusts this year. With these trusts probably also favouring applications with a Covid bias, the team were disappointed that the application to Garfield Weston was turned down as high hopes had been pinned on this one, although spirits were lifted a little with news of a grant of £7,500 from AllChurches Trust and also news that the Beatrice Laing Trust has promised £5,000 although conditional on the successful raising of all the money required to complete the Transformation Project.

As at the end of June, the figures I had received via Peter Terry showed that we had £348,603 in the Appeal Fund including the pledge of £110,000 from the Newton legacy. There is also a further £11,593 to come from those people who arranged standing orders assuming that everyone continues to pay them until December 2021. Against this figure are costs being incurred in connection with the Annexe which will reduce this figure of £348,603 by at least £16,500.

On 8th August Terry Vanner set off to cycle 480 miles around the roads of Essex and Suffolk as if he were following the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage trail. I have used his challenge to get us some useful publicity about the Transformation Project with articles in the Gazette, an interview with BBC Essex, and promotion of his challenge with daily postings on Facebook and the Wivenhoe Forum. I am grateful to Marika for posting updates for me each day on the Church website. Bonnie has set up a KindLink fund-raising page for Terry. Despite all this publicity and completing the challenge on Friday 21st August, at the time of writing sponsorship of £751 from just 31 people had been received.

Earlier this year, Marika updated the Appeal page on the St Mary's website for me. I have written an article for Wivenhoe News to update local residents about progress with the Appeal. I am expecting Wivenhoe's quarterly magazine to be in the shops from about 22nd August.

Minute 2020\54 Future Services at St. Mary's

The Worship Report had been circulated before the PCC meeting and members were directed to review the section "What's next" within the report in preparation for discussion. Erwin also prepared a paper which was also circulated before the meeting and read as follows –

Proposal for the PCC

The following conditions need to be fulfilled for Sunday services.

- Availability of ministers (thinking of illness, self-isolation and quarantine)
- Availability of a churchwarden or vergier or sidesperson at the door
- If music is required, availability of someone who can make and run recordings
- Well run booking system
- Availability of the church building (because of works)
- in line with the Government's and Church of England's guidance

If these conditions are fulfilled, we can move to the next phase and I would like to propose the following pattern of worship until at least the end of this year beginning on the first Sunday in October. The pattern will need to be reviewed when the Government and Church of England make changes to the guidance that may have an effect on the proposed pattern.

Sundays

1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays: 10.30am Holy Communion in church and online from the rectory

3rd Sunday 9.00am Holy Communion (BCP) in church *

10.30am Morning Prayer in church

10.30am Holy Communion online from the rectory

* during winter time and when there is no choir rehearsal at 9.30am – if choir resumes this

service moves to 8.00am – during summer time we could decide to have the service at 8.00am

Wednesdays

7.07pm Midweek reflection in church (church open from 6.45pm for private prayer)

Midweek reflection online (recorded by Erwin, Sara, Elisabeth at their homes)

The following points were discussed:

- a) **Pattern of worship as above**

Erwin explained the services. Marika wondered if the midweek service was going to return to church as while online 60-70 people had viewed the service and heating the church for a few people would not be financially viable at this point. Erwin said that he had been told that it was a perfect service for the amount of people currently able to attend church. The heating was discussed and the need for putting it on for some considerable time to warm the building during the winter months. The consensus was that the midweek and other services be reviewed again in the Spring when the argument of the heating won't play a role.

b) **Booking system: who?**

The numbers for the 9 a.m. service at present are increasing week on week and so there may be a problem in future. Booking was going to have to be properly organised – it was decided that there needed to be a specific time and day when people can book in for a service. Margaret was prepared to assist with the booking system but was not available for the first two weeks of October. The booking system would assist with the track and trace system. Douglas was concerned about the space that was not being used at present inside the church –the space does not lend itself to being able to accommodate more but Erwin will review this with James the Health and Safety Officer.

c) **Sound system (if music is required)**

In some churches the organ is being used but no congregational singing is allowed. At some point Graham will return to church to play the organ. If music is required then recorded music will be used over the sound system. A person is needed to deal with the music during Sunday morning services. The view of the PCC was that it would be good to have music before and after the service and Rick and Marika would be prepared to deal with that. It may be that Mary Jakens would be prepared to assist. The resources hub of a Church Near You have music which can be downloaded for use at services

d) **Heating system**

The heating cannot be switched on while the service is in progress – the church to be heated before the service.

e) **Toilets**

At a recent wedding and funeral the use of the toilets was requested and it was difficult to deal with as the PCC had decided that these were not to be used. It is still preferred that the toilets are closed during services but a system needed to be put in place for cleaning the toilets after they are used.

Minutes 2020\55 Annual Parish Meeting

a) **Meeting Date:** It was suggested that due to the restriction on capacity within the church building that a different approach be taken this year. A zoom Parish meeting be arranged for 10.30 a.m. on Saturday 17th October and access would be upon application for the relevant link from the PCC Secretary. Erwin would give his annual report and notification of those standing for election will be disclosed. Our Treasurer will also present the accounts. Questions will be able to be put and answered. If there is anything relevant that needs to be taken into consideration at the Annual Parish Meeting then this will be arranged.

The Annual Parish Meeting would be held immediately after the Parish Meeting (11.30) with just the Standing Committee being present in person within the church building and socially distanced.

The Parish Meeting will be converted into the Annual Parish Meeting if the instrument is signed off by the Bishop to allow a virtual annual meeting to take place and there is time to achieve that change. This will be explained at the time of notification of both meetings.

The above arrangements were put before the PCC and were approved unanimously.

b) **Charity Commission**

There is a requirement to file the Annual Parish Report and Accounts before the 31st October. This is normally done immediately after the Annual Parish Meeting in April. The mandatory section of the report and accounts have already been approved by the PCC and signed. Additional reports from teams and committees had been added since. The PCC Secretary asked for approval to file the 2019 Annual Parish Report and Accounts with the Charity Commission. The request for filing the accounts was approved unanimously.

Minute 2020\56 Finance – Bill Eborn

a) **Cash in funds as at end August 2020**

	Nominal Account Name	August £	July £	
Free of Restrictions	General Fund	49,465.55	51,819.24	
Restricted	Bell Fund	11,543.77	12,119.77	
Restricted	Choir Fund	865.27	865.27	

Restricted	Fabric-General	865.51	842.51		
Restricted	Fabric-General for Carolin Garden	6,500.00	6,500.00		
Restricted	Fabric Langley-Bale Legacy	1,797.19	1,797.19		
Restricted	Fabric Newton Legacy	204,443.32	204,443.32		
Restricted	Pledge from Newton for South Porch	110,000.00	110,000.00		
Restricted	Janet Ashton Legacy	10,000.00	10,000.00		
Restricted	Flower Fund	423.62	423.62		
Restricted	FOSM	6,005.45	6,187.45		
Restricted	Cory Maintenance Fund	1795.00	1,775.00		
Restricted	Organ Fund	40.00	40.00		
Designated	Sunday Club	643.91	618.91		
Restricted	Annexe and Emergency Appeal	134,685.76	137,826.76		
Restricted	Transformation Fund Main Appeal	95,891.80	94,669.76		
Restricted	Wivenhoe St Mary's Music Society	1,352.91	1,352.91		

NOTE: General Fund

It is now clear that our income is more than £2,500 short of our monthly outgoings.

We continue to receive the General Fund Standing Orders; however, we have lost almost all our loose collections, all the pew envelopes and over half the blue envelopes, and of course all our fund raising.

Thank you to the small number of people who have realised this and sent extra donations.

Increase in weekly giving

Bill spoke about his concern about the need for funding. It was suggested that Erwin write a letter for inclusion in the October issue of Tidings envelope together with a separate sheet giving standing order and BACs details. Existing Standing Orders could be amended upwards. Having a gift day in the usual way is difficult as the appeal team are trying to raise money for the transformation project. There are a total of 70 people contributing via standing orders. Some churches have decided not to pay their full parish share. In the Diocesan documents circulate before the PCC meeting there was worrying information contained within. Bill wished to ensure that we pay out full parish share. Marika believed the personal touch was needed and perhaps the form should be collected or followed up with a telephone call – the current circumstances may not be conducive for that. Erwin thought people could contact the Treasurer or speak to him in person, socially distanced, upon request. Perhaps Erwin may record a piece for the website asking for financial support.

Minute 2020\57 Fabric – Margaret Bigwood and Douglas McCormick

Anything that has arisen since the last PCC meeting has been reported within briefing sheets 14 – 24 dated 26th June – 4th September 2020.

Minute 2020\58 Mission & Ministry Partnership – Erwin Lammens

Nothing to report.

Minute 2020\59 Implementation of actions from Vision Day – Erwin Lammens

Nothing to report.

Minute 2020\60 Adult & Children's Ministry – Erwin Lammens

Erwin thought that it might be a good idea to offer a film for families using the existing 17 areas of seating. Heather had found a list of films that might be suitable.

Minute 2020\61 Safeguarding safeguardingstmaryswiv@gmail.com

Training link for online training is <http://www.cofelearning.org/index.html> and the parish reference code is 20.23.

Minute 2020\62 Health & Safety – James Peters

There have been no reports of any incidents to him. He has however been involved in carrying out the Church of England COVID Risk Assessment, and also working on the layouts for 2m and 1m+ distancing for public services (all with Erwin)..

All other risk assessments are up to date and not due for review until March, or unless something changes. He is awaiting further news on when works will start on the Transformation project as this will create some additional work on the Fire Risk Assessments and general risk assessments.

Minute 2020\63 To receive reports and take questions on the reports from the following committees.

a) **Fundraising Committee**, Tricia Bray

A suggestion had been put forward for a raffle with the printed ticket books going out with the November issue of Tidings. Bill wondered if half of the proceeds of the raffle could be given to a charity. The charity did not have to be selected at once. In principle the PCC were in favour of the raffle – the Fundraising Team would now be approached to see if they were prepared to organise it.

b) **Catering** – new leader urgently required

c) **Worship Group** – Graham Wadley & Erwin Lammens

Because public worship wasn't allowed and social distancing was in place the Worship Group hasn't met in the last few months apart from a Zoom meeting in June at which the re-opening of the church for private prayer was discussed. This PCC report is an update about our pattern of worship as it stands on 26 August and what options we may have for worship in church in the near future.

Lockdown and church closure

On Sunday 15 March the last communion service, on 21 March the last wedding and on 24 March the last funeral before lockdown took place. Following the Government's guidance no access to the church was allowed (except for maintenance) and public worship was suspended for nearly 4 months. On Saturday 28 March the first meditation was uploaded on St Mary's YouTube channel and a week later live streamed Sunday services were introduced on Facebook and St Mary's website. We have continued with these weekly online services, however the YouTube channel meditation has now evolved into a weekly reflection as an alternative for 7 past 7 on Wednesdays. The PCC in June recommended that services online should be continued also after we have moved back to the church for worship.

Private prayer and public worship

At the end of June private prayer was allowed in church, and the beginning of July saw the first public worship at St Mary's since lockdown: Saturday evening prayer. For seven weeks the church remained open on Saturdays from 2 until 4.30pm for private prayer and a service of evening prayer. Distancing of 2m was observed. Cleaning took place each time the church had been open to the public and sanitisers were purchased.

Sunday Communion services

On 8 August face coverings were made mandatory in places of worship with 1m+ social distancing. A new seating plan was introduced allowing 17 seating areas for individuals and households between 2 and 4 persons. On 16 August the first communion service after lockdown took place at the unusual hour of 9am. This first service was attended by 10 people, a week later by 14. St Mary's will continue to offer communion at 9am in church and online at 10.30am every Sunday in September. The format for communion in church is the same as the one used for streamed services with only one Bible reading and no singing. At the church only a limited number of people are able to attend; they are asked permission to record their name and phone number as part of the track and trace scheme.

Other services

Since the lifting of the church closure we also held a baptism, a funeral and there will be a wedding and another funeral in the next few days. These services take place under the same strict regulations and numbers may not exceed 30. For all services a risk assessment is produced.

What's next?

At the PCC meeting in June it was decided to wait with the installation of WiFi and streaming facilities in church as it was considered to be more beneficial as part of the transformation project. For this reason services on Sundays will still be streamed **from the rectory** until further notice.

Congregational singing at church services is not allowed but permission can be given for a small choir to sing at services if at least 2m distance between the singers and from the congregation can be observed. If the organ or piano is required at a funeral or wedding the keyboard will have to be cleaned in a specific manner as instructed on a card left on the keyboards. These instruments are only allowed to be played with permission of the director of music and the rector.

In July the national council of church bell ringers issued their guidance. There was an update on 21 August. Following the latest guidance it will still be impossible to ring a full peal with six bell ringers in the confined space of St Mary's bell chamber (maximum four seems an option but this may not produce the usual sound). A risk assessment will need to be in place as is also the case for anything else happening (services, cleaning, visits) in the church. We are grateful to James

Peters (H&S officer) for preparing the risk assessments. Also bell ringer Fred Sherratt is looking into the situation from the point of view of bell ringing.

Whether we will be able to re-instate a 10.30am service on Sunday depends on several factors:

- Government's and Church of England's guidance at the time
- Availability of the church building
- Availability of ministers
- Availability of a churchwarden or vergers or sidesperson at the door
- Well run booking system
- Air ventilation before anyone else arrives in church by creating a draft in the building by opening the main and side doors. When people arrive only one door should be kept open.

Queries

- As a 10.30am Sunday service may attract more people a booking system will need to be introduced. Who is willing to be our booking officer?
- There are serious concerns about circulation of particles through the heating system. Should we switch off the system before the beginning of the service?
- Organists in particular may be vulnerable. Graham is at high risk because of weakened immune system.

When (October the earliest) we reinstate the 10.30am service at the church, the 9am service will cease. When we start 10.30am services this may include recorded music until it will be safe to play the organ. We will need help with recording and playing agreed music at 10.30am before and after the service and during communion.

In any case even if the 10.30am Sunday service is reinstated, a (recorded) communion service from the Rectory will be premiered at 10.30am for those who prefer to worship at home or didn't manage to book their place.

The introduction of 7 past 7 on Wednesdays may be considered as well. Booking won't be needed.

When the Government's guidance changes the above will be reviewed in light of this new guidance

d) **Colchester Deanery** – Heather Edwards

Meeting Thursday 25th June 2020 Via Zoom.

Towards Financial Resilience.

Many Papers have been written and presented on how to reduce the deficit that has accumulated over the past three years. Four papers were circulated in advance of the PCC meeting.

Short term – The Plate Collection is down and Covid 19 means even less.

Mid Term – Forecasting Finance for the end of Year.

Long Term – Developing a strategic approach to Stewardship, embedding it into our Worship and Discipleship.

This was followed by a lively question and answer session.

Next meeting due 20th Oct venue and time to be confirmed, possibly again via Zoom.

A new member is required to replace Rick Cawley.

e) **Wivenhoe Churches Together** - no report

f) **FOSM** – Lynne Horner – nothing to report

g) **Pastoral Visitors** – Deirdre Gill

Visiting folk in their homes has been both rewarding and necessary. Always a welcomed smile and they look forward to these visits as some live alone and are lonely. The Corona virus may have been a stopper to visits but a telephone call is nearly as good as. They all look forward to getting back to normal and appear to be hesitant in going outside again. Here a bible tale helps to encourage confidence.

h) **Administration** – Lynne Horner – no report

i) **Spirituality Steering Group** – Janet Driver – nothing to report

j) **Church Bookings** – Jane Hughes – nothing to report

k) **Music Society** – Peter Hill – nothing to report

Minute 2020\64 GDPR, Communications and Licensing Report – Marika Footring

It's been a busy time digitally speaking, with many new skills needing to be mastered.

Daily updates on the church website and Facebook page, most recently also promoting Terry Vanner's cycle ride for the Transformation Project.

Until 19 July (end of term) 13 weekly Sunday Club packages published. These consisted of Videos, Bible Story, Activities, Songs and Prayer. Lucy Crocker's input has been invaluable in producing attractive content. Uptake has been good.

Since 22 June: 20 YouTube/Facebook videos were published. 8 of these were live streamed from the rectory with the assistance of Jonas and Mieke.

Views of church services increase steadily after the 10.30am Sunday live showing and video continues to be watched for days afterwards, with the highest number of views being 203.

YouTube statistics show that the weekly Midweek Reflection videos are also popular. Bishop Roger gave permission for his YouTube Sunday Reflections on the Gospel reading for that day to be used on St Mary's website's Listen Again feature (also available in the Sermon Recordings).

Marked increase in website views from the beginning of lockdown, with Sunday and Wednesday numbers especially up. Vice versa click-throughs noticed between website and Facebook so the two platforms are working for us in a complementary way.

Marika was thanked for all of her hard work.

Minute 2020\65 Overseas Link – Rosemary Murchie – nothing to report

Minute 2020\66 Any Other Notified Business - None

Next Meeting: The next PCC will take place on **Tuesday 13th October 2020 at 19.30**

The meeting closed at 21.10hrs and concluded with those present joining together in saying The Grace.

To be confirmed – Parish Meeting Saturday 17th October 10.30 via zoom and Annual Meeting thereafter with restricted attendance.