

The Parish of St Mary-the-Virgin, Wivenhoe
PCC Meeting on Tuesday 12th January 2021, 7.30pm via Zoom

Welcome & opening prayer:

Erwin opened the meeting and asked that we include in our prayers Eric and Mary, Marika and Lewis and others in the community who were unwell and now recovering. Referring to 1 Peter Erwin said that we all have a calling to serve God and serve others. We are all members of a royal priesthood, not just clergy.

Present: Rev Erwin Lammens; Peter Terry; Douglas McCormick; Margaret Bigwood; Bill Eborn; Greg Butler; Heather Edwards; Rick Cawley; Revd. Dr. Sara Batts-Neale; Revd. Dr. Elisabeth Ring; Graeme Martin; Jenny Heaps; Graham Wadley; Sandra Osborne; Nick Gustard; Bonnie Hill; Also in attendance: Glyn Stanway

Apologies: Eric Jakens and Jane Taylor

Conflict of Interest – Bonnie Hill – Transformation Project Minute 2021\4

Minutes of the PCC meeting held on the 8th December 2020 were approved.

Minute 2021\1 Matters arising from the PCC Minutes

a) **Vacancies**

- **Fundraising Team Leader** suggestions were still needed. This post really needs to be filled in the near future.
- **The Children's Society** Gill Black has said that she is willing to be the new link person for the Society, as Ann Price's successor.
- **Churches Together** – Gill Black has also volunteered to be the new representative for St Mary's on the Churches Together team as Ann Evershed's successor.

b) **Decision on June Market and Open Gardens**

June Market – A great deal of planning is required to be able to take the event forward and at present we haven't got a fundraising team co-ordinator. Graeme thought that perhaps going ahead in September and co-ordinating it with the Scruffs event might be the answer. It might also be part of the Transformation Project completion event. The church being unavailable in June also plays a part. Stall spaces won't be available or reduced on the south side of the church. There will however be space in the nave available which would assist with the weather in September. Erwin thought it was wise not to proceed at the moment with June Market. There may be an opportunity to plan something with some gazebos in the churchyard during the summer but nothing at present is certain when planning for the future. The June Market would not take place this year.

Open Gardens Jenny Heaps confirmed the event, if it is able to go ahead, has been scheduled for the weekend 22\23rd May.

c) **Community Group affiliation decision**

Peter Hill had submitted the following – "I am aware that PCC members at their December meeting gave an indication that in principle they were in favour of St. Mary's hosting the group I proposed. Having considered it further it may be possible to extend the group to others e.g. dementia sufferers; stroke victims and those suffering with long term illness. Volunteering opportunities would arise from this sort of group for those within the community who suffer social isolation and would be happy to attend such a group to sit, chat and enjoy the programme offered.

I think if it is promoted in the right way, there is no reason why this group based at St Mary's should deter people of other faiths and religions, or of no faith at all, from attending and benefitting from the sense of belonging and community which I would like to encourage.

I would therefore be grateful if the PCC would further consider making this group in some way part of St Mary's, perhaps in the same way that the Music Society is constituted. I think the group should contribute to the overheads of St Mary's. The contribution to cover expenses may not be very much at first while it is establishing itself but as it grows and is as successful as I think it could be, then in time it could be a more significant contributor to the finances of the Church.

The practicalities of establishing this group, including giving it a name as well as an identity of its own needs to be worked through and I am willing to assist with setting the group up. I now look to the PCC to suggest a way forward."

At the December PCC meeting (Minute 2020\96d4) it was decided that, in principle, the PCC was in favour of a dementia group using the new St Mary's facilities but that the details of its setting up should be discussed at this meeting.

Sara had been asked to form a group to discover the ways that St Mary's could provide support to the community post-Covid with the new facilities. Sara had been speaking to people and some really good ideas had been suggested of things that are missing in the community, however, Sara felt that we also need to be reaching out to those people that we don't have contact with. Colchester Citizens have a model of how to listen to others, e.g. schools, food bank. We need to seek out those

who are on the margins of local communities, identify needs and wants and from there perhaps find the people who would be willing to assist with setting up groups in the future. Sara thought that the dementia group was one of the things that would be identified but she suggested that need to think "people first, then programmes." There are limited people and resources and care has to be taken. Bill agreed with the approach that Sara had suggested. Douglas said we were looking at a demand within the community and Sara should be doing her research first. Jenny asked what affiliation meant – it was described as being a deep relationship with St. Mary's rather than a group hiring the facilities. It was decided that Sara undertake her research first before any further work on the proposal from Peter Hill.

Minute 2021\2 Correspondence:

- a) **Appointment of** Right Reverend Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani as Bishop of Chelmsford. On the Chelmsford Diocesan website there is information about her. It is worth watching the videos about Bishop Guli's background. When Erwin receives information about her installation he will share the details.
- b) **Request** to put recycling bins in the Carolin Garden. The Standing Committee declined the request as it was not an appropriate place and Bakers were on site. (see below under fabric)
- c) **Living in Love & Faith** A Diocese Study Day has been offered to clergy and PCC members on Thursday 28th January via Zoom. The resources are available to download – information within the email which will be sent out by Bonnie. We plan to debate in a few months.

Minute 2020\3 Finance

a) **Cash in funds as at end 31 December 2020**

	Nominal Account Name		November
Free of Restrictions	General Fund	48,495.64	28,273.83
General Fund Reserve	Based on 3 months COVID Expenditure Budget		20,148.25
Restricted	Bell Fund	11,553.85	11,553.85
Restricted	Choir Fund	865.27	865.27
Restricted	Fabric-General – non Transformation	3,322.37	3299.37
Restricted	Fabric Langley-Bale Legacy	1,797.19	1,797.19
Restricted	Janet Ashton Legacy	10,000.00	10,000.00
Restricted	Flower Fund	423.62	423.62
Restricted	FOSM	6,113.76	6,168.71
Restricted	Cory Maintenance Fund	1,875.00	1,855.00
Restricted	Organ Fund	40.00	40.00
Designated	Sunday Club	743.91	718.91
Restricted	Wivenhoe St Mary's Music Society	1,198.45	1,198.45
Rolling Total Available for Transformation		552,077.51	551,911.64
Baker's Contract			425,191.38
Till mid 2021			
Current Quoted Cost of Nave Chairs (including VAT)			42,225.60

a) **Guidelines for Transformation Finances**

Please note the guidelines which had been agreed by the Standing Committee be followed.

- No member of St Mary's, other than Douglas, may agree to ANY TRANSFORMATION EXPENDITURE.
- All invoices will be paid from the Transformation Account, once they have been countersigned by Douglas.
- Would anyone who receives an invoice relating to the Transformation Project please immediately email a copy to both Douglas and Bill as it is important that all invoices are paid in good time and some of the funds will need to be called from deposit.

The Rolling Total of the Amount still available to be spent on the Transformation Project will appear in the Cash in Funds schedule presented to the PCC each month.

The final accounts for 2020 are available with the exceptions of the accruals that need to be applied.

b) **Christmas Charities**

St Mary's Christmas Charities raised the following amounts – for Namalemba £620 and Beacon House will receive £505. Bill believed it to be the best result so far.

- c) Lent Charity – It was proposed by Bill that Water Aid be selected as providing clean water was vital. Erwin will write something for Tidings and people who wanted to donate would put it through Bill's door. The proposal was seconded by Bonnie Hill and unanimously agreed.

Minute 2021\4 The Transformation Project

a) **Transformation Project Management Update** – Douglas McCormick

- Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th December meeting had been sent via attachment with the agenda.
- 1. The wall to East Street had been demolished and railings removed in preparation for site access and the lime tree had recently been removed.
- 2. Formal contract work started week commencing 4 January 2021.
- 3. Project information panels with printers. Two identical panels each approx 3mx2.5m one for the East and one for the West will be mounted on Heras security fencing, letting the community know what is happening.
- 4. Bishop's blessing of the ground planned for the 22nd January had to be cancelled due to the Tier 5 COVID restrictions in place. The Bishop; VIP guests: the PCC and all church team\committee leaders had been asked to inform their members.
- 5. A question had been received about the gravestones that had been removed from the Carolin Garden – they had been taken away by Bakers for cleaning and photographs. They will return to site when they are required.
Greg asked about the reuse of materials from the south porch demolition – the dressed stone had been kept but the rest had not.
Douglas is available to assist those who have questions about the project.

b) **Transformation Project Appeal** – Peter Hill

Peter noted that the PCC had agreed to fund all the costs of the Transformation Project. This was brilliant news as both of the main lottery funds; the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Lottery Fund were still not accepting applications for non-Covid related grant funding. It is possible that this situation will change and he will continue to monitor the situation. Peter also said that he thinks it is possible that the Essex Community Foundation which runs 100+ trusts for private individuals and families may be willing to contribute towards the costs of those other items which are not already funded by the PCC. He needs to know what those items are and a budgetary cost figure for them. There may also be residents in Wivenhoe who are willing to support appeals for specific items. Lots of people who are not part of the immediate church community supported the Appeal when we launched it in 2018.

In response to the request made for a list of items that are still required – Peter Terry stated that the following were being actively investigated by various groups or individuals: live streaming equipment; stained glass window; sound and audio loop for the annexe and white goods. When fully prepared and costed the list will be forwarded to Peter Hill.

c) **Letters** Erwin has prepared a letter for Standing Order donors to let them know that the project has been funded but asking them to continue payments until the 31st December 2021. The money could be put towards the additional items that are needed mentioned above. A letter is also being prepared for Tidings and for the website to update people.

Minute 2021\5 Fabric

- ### a) **Recycling bins** A request had been received from Transition Wivenhoe on the 17th December asking if two recycling bins could be put in the Carolin Garden to collect crisp packets and pringle boxes. This was put to the Standing Committee and the decision was made that it was inappropriate to put this within the Carolin Garden and the added difficulty of the construction work taking place also had an impact on the decision. It was suggested that the containers be put in the Fish & Chip shop car parking area.
- ### b) **Church Clock** The finance officer of Wivenhoe Town Council asked the PCC Secretary for information about the church clock – if we had any history about the clock, whether we insured it or had had it valued in the past. Bonnie consulted Austin Baines who was a Town Councillor at the time when the new clock mechanism was installed and he was unable to assist further than refer WTC back to their archives of the 1980s. Bonnie checked the insurance documentation and as St. Mary's don't own the clock nor has responsibility for the clock then our insurance cover does not include it within the policy. A reply was sent.
- ### c) **Roof Alarm** The annual service will be undertaken on the 13th January.
- ### d) **Defects Period** for the masonry work undertaken by Youngers Ltd. in 2019 on the tower and south west end of the church had come to an end. Andrew Nightingale had inspected the areas of work and had confirmed to Youngers that we were content.

Minute 2021\6 Clergy

An article in the Church Times dated 4th December had been circulated to PCC members before the meeting for information.

The main points made in the article – headlined “Chelmsford to lose clergy posts” subheading “traffic-light system will denote status of vacancies” are given below.

Chelmsford Diocesan synod had formally approved a proposal to cut 61 stipendiary clergy posts by the

end of 2021 and a possible 49 more posts are to go if the financial situation did not improve. Due to the pandemic the cuts come five years in advance of the original proposal which was to achieve this by 2025. Plans had been in place since 2011 to achieve this having taken into account that 47% of stipendiary clergy were due to retire within a decade to reduce clergy posts to the minimum sustainable number of 215. A traffic light system will operate, where posts “to be retained or filled if vacant” are classified as Green, and those “desirable and should be retained if finances permit” are Amber. Red posts are those “unlikely to be filled with a full-time stipendiary incumbent with other options for enabling ministry should be considered”. Benefices in the Red category which are unable to cover the average £80,180 costs of a full-time stipendiary priest will be invited to discuss alternatives, such as interim ministry, a self-supporting priest, or licensed lay minister. It was anticipated that most of the reductions in stipendiary clergy posts would be achieved through retirements and clergy moving from posts that are to close into the considerable number currently vacant posts that would remain.

Erwin thought the Church Times article was a good summary of what had been circulated within the Diocese. Colchester Deanery is doing well as 96% of the Parish share is paid in full. The Deanery vision plan has worked out that the Deanery can afford 12.5 stipendiary posts which means that most green and amber posts can be retained in our deanery. The £80,180 mentioned includes many items such as the incumbent’s stipend, housing, training, contribution to the Diocese and other expenses. We are fortunate that we are able to pay our parish share and in the deanery there are only a few churches that are unable to pay in full. Bill planned to pay the amount which is set for this year and asked the PCC if they were content for him to do so. The money was available to enable the parish share to be paid at the 2021 rate but there was a deficit between income and expenditure at present. It was not possible to increase the payment to enable the new figure of £80,180 to be reached. When we are over COVID this should be looked at again to see if we are able to get nearer to the new figure required. It was proposed by Bill Eborn and seconded by Douglas McCormick that St. Mary’s continue with the 2021 parish share payment plan. This was unanimously agreed.

Minute 2021\7 Mission & Ministry Partnership – Erwin Lammens

A meeting will take place on 13th January. Erwin will report back at the February PCC meeting.

Minute 2021\8 Adult & Childrens Ministry - Erwin Lammens

a) **Tier 4 impact on Services**

On 23rd December members of the Standing Committee were consulted about the suspension of church services at St. Mary’s due to the Tier 4 status that would take effect on 26th December. The Standing Committee unanimously agreed that -

From Boxing Day onwards the church will remain closed for worship (except funerals if allowed) or prayer until that time that it will be safe to meet again in church. This would mean that the Sunday morning services and all other worship or events in church will be suspended from this Sunday 27 December until that time it will be safe again, with the exception of funerals if the Government and Church of England allows funerals to take place in church.

b) **Tier 5 - New National Lockdown**

A recommendation by the Diocese had been received to move all services online. For St Mary’s the situation remains the same as we had already decided to suspend church services and private prayer after Christmas (with the exception of funerals) and to continue to offer online services.

The Diocesan Communications Group sent the following on 4th January -

“The Prime Minister has this evening announced a new national lockdown across England. The accompanying [Government guidance](#) states that ‘you can leave home to attend or visit a place of worship for communal worship’ during the lockdown period. However, as you are aware we continue to be the worst hit area of the country and our hospitals are now under extraordinary pressure. We must do all that we can to protect the most vulnerable in our communities and the NHS.

We therefore strongly advise that following the Feast of Epiphany on Wednesday, all services should move online (with no congregation physically present). The only exception to this is funerals. We also advise that any face to face meetings take place by other means or are cancelled. The Church of England has also issued a statement this evening which [can be read here](#). We will be in touch again with further information as the details and implications of this new lockdown become clearer. In the meantime we repeat our thanks for all that you continue to do in your parishes and communities during this most difficult of times.”

c) Erwin hoped that the church could be opened for Lent but this won’t be known until nearer the time. He thanked Sara, Elisabeth and Glyn for their assistance with online services.

Minute 2021\9 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 2021\10 Health & Safety – James Peters

Other than compiling a risk assessment for the St Nicholas event, there is nothing to report.

Minute 2021\11 To receive reports and take questions on the reports from the following committees.

a) **Fundraising Committee**, new co-ordinator urgently required - no report

Amazon Smile direct link <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1165660-0>

b) **Catering** – no report

c) **Worship Group** – Graham Wadley – Minutes of the Worship Group had been circulated

d) **Colchester Deanery** – Heather Edwards – no report

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

f) **FOSM** – Lynne Horner – no report

g) **Pastoral Visitors** – Deirdre Gill

No change from last month except for Delia Schafle who has died from her condition of Alzheimer's/memory loss. Another member is not feeling very well and taken to her bed. Visiting is forbidden, so a phone call to all the other members suffices, until the Covid19 Pandemic passes

h) **Administration** – Lynne Horner - nothing to report

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

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

k) **Music Society** – Peter Hill

Peter needed to know when the Church could be used for concerts again. He appreciated that this was not an easy question to answer as it relied on the Covid pandemic easing as much as when the alternations to the nave and the construction of the Annexe would be completed. All of the music groups that had been booked last year, and subsequently cancelled, remain keen to play in St Mary's. He suspected that there would be a mad scramble by different organisations looking to book these groups in 2021.

Peter will be organising the Music Society Annual meeting in January. Members of last year's committee have indicated a willingness to continue. Sadly Jan Richardson had passed. He has someone who is willing to take her place. He expected the meeting to confirm a donation of £198 to the Transformation Project Appeal arising from a concert last year.

Minute 2021\12 GDPR, Communications and Licensing Report – Marika Footring

Nothing to report

Minute 2021\13 Overseas – Rosemary Murchie

The following email was received by Rosemary Murchie on 23rd December in response to hers which sent Christmas wishes to those in Namalembe on behalf of St. Mary's.

Dear Sisters and brothers

Christmas Greetings from the entire Christians of St. Andrews Church of Uganda Namalembe. We are also wondering how you're living in this difficult time. We are also facing difficulties because of the Covid19 virus is affecting more people according to the Ministry of Health report and we ask our self how Christians will celebrate this Christmas and all our Christians are following the advice of Ministry to wear Mask and keeping distances. It is good that we are praying to each other this way and that way in UK. Send our Greetings and Appreciation to our friends in Wivenhoe in UK that we wish them a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year 2021 and continue to pray to each other. God bless you. Charles, Betty Kakya, Betty Mafuko

Minute 2021\14 Any Other Notified Business

a) **Charity Commission** All new and returning Trustees had been registered by the PCC Secretary

b) **Bellringing** – Heather Edwards

Ringling Bells for Christmas day was a Glorious delight. The applause afterwards was a wonderful surprise even though we had not rung the bells for just over nine months (the tenor bell was rung on remembrance day). Most gratefully a bottle of Stones Ginger Wine was found on the bottom steps when we came down.

c) **Christmas Tree** – Erwin asked for a volunteer to take down and pack away the Christmas tree before the 18th January. Margaret, Sandra and Geoff will go down to church and take a look and see what they can do.

d) **Chris Gibson** had asked Greg about putting bat roosting boxes on the exterior of the church. Erwin would prefer not to encourage bats to be near the church. The droppings created by them and the danger of the bats entering the church itself was of concern to PCC members. Greg would let Chris Gibson know that the PCC had not given permission.

Next Meeting:The next PCC will take place on **9th February at 19.30** via zoom.

The meeting closed at 20.45 and concluded with those present joining together in saying The Lords Prayer.