

## Minutes of St George's Church PCC Meeting

Held on Monday 5 September 2022 at 7.45 pm

Held at St George's Place, 1 Cheyne Lane

Present: Revd Canon Martyn Taylor (Chair), Associate Rector Ben Topham, Curate Andy Acheson, Jaish Mahan (Church Warden), Koleh Rees (Church Warden), Ed Daniels, Carl Fender, Julia Fox, Simon Johnson (Treasurer), Rick Lee, Ian Mace, Gordon McKechnie, Sarah Nottidge, Keith Roberts, Matt Wild and Pam Lee (Minute Secretary). Clare Arthey and Tom Nottidge were in attendance.

MT began the meeting with a reflection from 2 Samuel 11 and Acts 8, an encouragement to the church to be active and open to the promptings and direction of the Spirit, and opened the meeting in prayer.

- 1. Apologies.** Apologies were received from Philip Dale and Stefan Rakowski. MT led the PCC in prayer for Stefan and for the community of St George's school.
- 2. Net Zero challenge and church heating.** Drawing attention to the previously circulated paper, TN explained that there was as yet no reliable, affordable technological fix that could be applied to St George's in order to achieve net zero by 2030, in line with the General Synod's requirement. The PCC discussed a number of scenarios, and how they might play out, including hydrogen boiler technology, purchasing carbon offsets and the restrictions imposed by the church's listed status and physical location. It was decided that maintaining the status quo was the appropriate course of action for now and the topic would be revisited in three years' time. In the current context of rapidly rising energy costs, practical changes that would reduce church heating bills, including lowering the temperature in church and delaying turning the heating on, would be investigated.
- 3. Buildings report.** CA referred the meeting to the previously agreed 5 year rolling plan, which included repairs to the tech desk in 2022. A temporary solution is currently in use, and it was agreed that as this served its purpose, minor upgrades that would make the desk more serviceable should be carried out.

Repairs to the chancel roof are scheduled for 2023 and preparations need to be put in place now to facilitate this. Having spoken to Stephanie Norris, an architect who has worked with St George's for a number of years, CA proposed that Stephanie be asked to put together a schedule of works and handle the tender process. Although £35-40000 had been budgeted, it was likely that the total cost would be in the region of £52-53000, to include project management and health and safety measures. Figures are net of VAT, but the church will be able to reclaim any VAT paid. Initial conversations with members of the congregation had taken place and a team will be set up to identify and apply for appropriate grant funding. CA proposed that Stephanie be asked to start the process now in order to begin the work in 2023. This was seconded by CF and carried unanimously.

CA also asked for authorisation for a survey of the church windows, at an estimated cost of £1020 + VAT, in order to establish their condition, prioritise the work needed and to set a budget for repairs and cleaning in 2023. CA proposed to bring quotes for the survey to the buildings committee who would review them and accept the most competitive. This was seconded by IM and approved unanimously.

Lastly, one of the church chandeliers had been tripping the lights in church. This has been repaired but given the age of the lighting, CA felt it would be prudent to look at the other lights. She would obtain a quote for this and revert to the PCC at a later date.

TN and CA were thanked for their work and TN left the meeting.

4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2022.** These were accepted as a true record of the meeting.
5. **Matters arising.** SJ confirmed that the agreed monthly pay supplement for MT and BT was now being payrolled.
6. **Ministry update: hardship ministry in a recession.** BT explained that the Fresh Hope ministry and church hardship funds have been used to alleviate the impacts of poverty for some years, but the current economic climate meant that the number of requests for help were noticeably increasing and were likely to continue to increase, not least because of the rapidly rising costs of heating. MT asked the PCC for their thoughts on this topic and a wide-ranging discussion ensued. The PCC considered the likely impacts of increasing inflation and particularly rising fuel costs on household finances, and expressed a great deal of concern for those in the community and the church family who were most likely to be affected. BT informed the PCC that Churches Together in Stamford were looking into a 'warm space' scheme which would mean that for every day of the week, a church in the town would provide a heated space that would be open to all, and St George's would be part of this conversation; members of the PCC suggested a number of other possible practical actions. MT thanked the PCC for their thoughts and ideas, confirming that this discussion was the start of a conversation.
7. **Safeguarding report.** The latest report was noted, with thanks to Helen Leech.
8. **Deanery/Diocesan report.** There was nothing significant to report, other than the appointment of the vicar of Corby Glen as Area Partnership Dean and Howard Jones, from St George's Church, is the lay co-lead.
9. **Finance Report.** SJ referred the PCC to the previously circulated finance report. Whilst church finances were generally on budget, he expressed concern that Sunday collections and non-standing order donations were 6% down on budget and were likely to be hit further as times get tougher; energy costs would inevitably increase as the year progresses, and it was also likely that the church would need to resource a larger hardship fund.  
  
In terms of the two recent, generously supported appeals, £10,000 has been sent to Sam Ngorok to support his work in Uganda. Sam has been asked to provide evidence of how this has been distributed. MT confirmed that Sam has sourced food supplies for 1,000 needy households and was arranging for distribution. Mo Power has received an initial tranche of funding and was providing details of her work through a number of channels, details of which have now been provided to the church family.
10. **HR report.** CA informed the PCC that the church had two interns starting this autumn, one of whom would join after the October half term. The staff team had recently spent a day together which had been very positive. In response to questions, MT confirmed that he had begun the search for a new curate to replace AA when he moved to Grantham and was having informal conversations with two individuals; the search for a worship leader would be relaunched this autumn; and a gift day in support of the church revitalisation fund was being considered to tie in with the Grantham move. MT also acknowledged that the departure of three members of staff in 2023 would mean the staff team would be reshaped but expressed confidence that God would provide the right people to replace them at the right time, as He has always done.
11. **GIG update.** See above in the finance report.

**12. Any Other Business.** MT informed the meeting that Kate Gent had resigned from the PCC as she and her husband have moved out of the area. The vacancy may remain until the next APCM, but suitable candidates may be referred to MT or BT in the meantime. A letter of thanks from the CEEC had been received. BT encouraged members of the PCC to attend the monthly Prayer Central Meeting.

There being no further business, MT invited JM to close the meeting in prayer. The meeting ended at 9.10pm.

**13. Date of Next Meeting.** Monday 3 October 2022.

Signed Chairman Revd Canon Martyn Taylor Date 3 October 2022