

Parish of Widcombe
Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting followed by the APCM
at St Thomas on Tuesday 25th April 2017 7-30pm

Present:-

Tim Buckley	Angie Frith	Trudy Healey	Bill James
Mark Nish	Debbie Nish	Victoria Jones	Peter Jones
Haydn Wilkins	Jill Oldham	Mary Udale-Smith	Andrew Udale-Smith
Annette Whateley	Sarah Buckley	Sian Lewis	Tamsin McMaster
Chris Tottle	Carol Tottle	Anne Lawson	Judith Harries
Fiona Coverdale	David Pollard	Thomas Nohre	Graham Brown
Martin Geake	Steven Ayers	Jonathan Potter	Simon Walters
Joshy Easaw	Elizabeth Easaw	Liz Holden-White	Louise Sturgess
Sheila A Read	Jonathan Hilsden	Aurelia Hilsden	

ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

1 Election of Churchwardens

The following agreed to stand as churchwardens of St Thomas à Becket Church –
Sian Lewis and Angela Frith

The following agreed to stand as chapel wardens of St Matthew's Church –
Andrew Udale-Smith and Bill James

The prospective Church/Chapel wardens were proposed and seconded as follows:-

Sian Lewis	proposed by Angela Frith	seconded by Carol Tottle
Angela Frith	proposed by Trudy Healey	seconded by Andrew Udale-Smith
Andrew Udale-Smith	proposed by Judith Harries	seconded by Alison Furber
Bill James	proposed by Andrew Udale-Smith	seconded by Mark Nish

No other nominations were received, so the above names stand as elected

2 Election of Assistant Churchwardens

The following people were reappointed by a show of hands en bloc

Jan Stokes
Nigel Stokes
Charles Oldham
Steven Ayers
Annette Whateley

The Annual Vestry Meeting closed at 7.45 and was followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
at St Thomas, Widcombe, on Tuesday 25th April 2017 7.45pm

1. Opening Prayers

Tim Buckley said the opening prayers

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from:

Alison Furber David Matthews Jane Matthews Charles Oldham Tony Coverdale

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed as a true record.

Proposed by Peter Jones Seconded by Martin Geake

4. Matters arising from the last meeting

There were no matters arising.

5. Report on the Electoral Roll

Alison Furber

Numbers on the Electoral Roll have varied, and in March there were 140 people on the Roll although a more realistic number is 116.

As people move to different places, it is difficult to keep track of everybody but numbers on the Electoral Roll are taken into account when setting the parish share. In order to keep everything up-to-date, changes of address need to be sent to AMF, and there will be a new Electoral roll in 2019.

AMF is aware of the concern about data protection laws, so the Roll will not be permanently displayed in the porch, although the list is available from her to view.

Finally we are pleased to welcome six new members on the Electoral Roll:

Ellen Rachel Levenson, Lindsay Anne Dunn, Elizabeth Holden-White, Joshy Easaw, Elizabeth Easaw and Gillian Smout

6. Secretary's Report

Trudy Healey

The full PCC met nine times during the year, with an average level of attendance of 71%. A Standing Committee meeting was held prior to each PCC meeting to set the agenda. The PCC expressed their ongoing thanks to Chris May who kindly donates his office each month for the PCC meeting, which is located half way between both Parish churches.

In 2016, St Thomas held three baptisms, four services of Thanksgiving, five marriages and one service of blessing. There were eight funerals/interment of ashes during the year and at St Matt's, there were two baptisms held.

The Bristol branch of the German Lutheran Church continues to use St Thomas à Becket church for its monthly services as it has done for over forty years.

At St Matt's, the weekly contemporary services and midweek Life hub groups and pastorates, have continued all year.

Weekly attendance for the Sunday services at St Matt's varied considerably depending on student numbers, but averaged approximately 75. The worshipping community totals 150 of which 30 are children and young people under 17.

As well as these regular services, St Matt's was the venue for the Widcombe Junior School Easter service, Leavers service, Harvest Festival and Christmas service for all for the staff, pupils and parents.

The Orthodox Church continues to use St Matthew's for their regular weekly worship.

Attendance at Christmas services in the Parish last year was the most we have had for many years. There were over 140 at St Thomas for the Nine Lessons and Carols and a great attendance of 275 for the Midnight Mass and Christmas Day services combined. A Christingle service was held at St Matthew's, as was 'Carols by Laserlight', with approximately 380 between the two services

The Wednesday coffee morning at St Matt's was still well attended and from this, the monthly Lunch and

Natter continued on the first Wednesday of each month. The Christmas Lunch was especially well attended offering a full Christmas meal and entertainment from the Widcombe School Choir. We are very grateful to Hayley Johnson and Tara McFarlane for their continuing help and enthusiasm at these events.

Thanks were expressed by the PCC to Angie Frith, the PCC Chair, for all her continuing hard work, in what has been a very challenging year for her and her family.

7. Priest's Report

Revd Tim Buckley

TB's reflections included many thanks for fellowship, traditions, prayers and the restoration of the patrons' rights by Wells. A thanksgiving service was held in July at St Thomas, with TB as Priest in Charge of a parish in its own right with full incumbency. He believes that Widcombe may be the only parish which has had a reversal of Suspension for the Living in the diocese. There is also a new Curate arriving in the Parish in July and she will be inaugurated at a service at Wells on Sunday 2nd July. TB expressed his thanks to JH for all her help too.

With the aid of a slide presentation, TB repeated the Parish Vision statement as we are privileged to be two churches— two distinct communities – but one church family.

The 8am service at St Thomas is thriving, and more people are reconnecting with church or finding faith for the first time. Some have returned after attending funerals, marriages, baptism and celebrations at each church. New people were also introduced after a successful Alpha course which ran during January and February 2017 at St Matt's.

TB reiterated the Parish vision that "God is calling us to be a Christian community that reaches out to the parish and beyond, to invite people to encounter Gods' grace" We have growing International links with both Burundi and Sri Lanka, as TB will be returning to Sri Lanka later in the year, and links with Widcombe C of E VA Junior School continue to strengthen.

There will soon be a new organ at St Thomas (see **Report on the fabric of St Thomas' Church** for more information) and Phase 1 of the roof repairs at St Matthew's will soon be under way.

TB continued that this a time of challenge and inspiration for both churches for the next generation and thanked the churchwardens for all that they do, and to each person who serves the church and community, the visible and less visible – many parts, but all valuable and important. He finished by asking "God to bless us as we thank Him for all that He has done and trust Him for all that lies ahead".

8. Financial Report

Mark Nish

MN thanked Graham Brown for his many faithful years as Independent Examiner and offered him a small token of appreciation on behalf of the PCC. MN also thanked SL for her help with the smooth transition between Treasurer appointments and also for the help of Aurelia Hilsden throughout the year.

This is a brief overview of the financial activity during 2016 and the Annual Accounts for the calendar years as adopted by the PCC on 21st March 2016. The Annual accounts, with fuller explanation are attached to these Minutes.

Income

- MN noted that 67% of income comes from voluntary giving, after Gift Aid.
- Thanks were expressed to Peter Jones for his contribution and also to Mary Udale-Smith for her generosity with time in the office
- There has been a big increase in our Parish Share but it is now capped. We fulfilled our obligation of this in full. The Parish Share in 2017 will be £43,000, a 15% increase on 2016. We are the 14th highest contributor out of 34 wards, with Bath Abbey contributing the most. Most of the money is

used for Missionary, paying for our Vicar and Curate and for other parishes in the Diocese who struggle financially.

- The Sundries referred to are a survey of St Matt's roof together with a fuller Measured Survey of St Matt's and architects fees for the pre-application for St Mark's land.

Restricted Funds

- Unrestricted funds may be used for anything in the Parish, while Restricted Funds are for specific items as follows:
- St Thomas Restoration Fund – this is for the repairs and maintenance of the fabric of the church
- Organ Fund – The balance brought forward (£1841) is for St Matt's but the sum received during 2016 (£16,353) is for a St Thomas replacement organ
- Widcombe United Charities – this is an older fund specifically for the widows and orphans of the parish
- The restricted Funds under Mission and Charitable giving relates to a Growth for Life Gardening project run by Martin Geake.
- Other refers to a generous donation of £3,000 from the Widcombe Association towards the cost of new chairs for the Parish Hall, and £2,000 for a new sound desk at St Matt's
- Into 2017, the restricted and unrestricted church assets are roughly 50/50.

Going forward, as the new budget has been set, there is a planned giving increase required from £53,000 to £66,000. In addition, due to a discrepancy with St Matt's heating bills, entirely the error of the Utilities company, there will be a significant increase in these costs in 2017, as the amount owed is paid.

9. Report on the fabric of St Thomas' Church

Angela Frith

Very little of note had to be done to keep St Thomas in good order this year.

The lead flashings between the nave roof and tower walls had failed, allowing rainwater to leak into the church. These were replaced by a suitable contractor under the guidance of the church architect.

The bay tree in the upper part of the churchyard overlooking the road and neighbour's property was cut down at ground level by the council as it was putting pressure on the retaining wall.

The digital Viscount organ is over 35 years old and there was concern that if it started to fail, spares and repairs would no longer be available. The sound is also harsh, so having received a legacy, it was decided to designate this towards a replacement organ. A PCC sub-committee have been looking into finding a suitable replacement. With the help of the Diocesan Advisor and organists Robert Anderson and Jules Addison, we have chosen a new Wyvern Organ, of similar size to the existing organ. We have been granted an interim licence by the Chancellor to order the instrument and arrange for the works to be done. We will need to raise just over £3,000 to cover the outstanding cost of this work and a fundraising campaign has started.

The PA sound system is also in need of upgrading and although this is a separate project, we hope to identify components which need replacing and get suitable quotes in the next few weeks.

We are very grateful to Alistair Durie who constantly ensures that the church and churchyard are well maintained.

10. Report on the fabric of St Matthews' Church

Bill James

Bill started his report expressing thanks to the Lord: Ps 106.1 and the members of the SMART team, especially Martian Geake for all his hard work and also Peter Jones for his tireless work and attention to detail.

There is to be a complete re-ordering of St Matt's with the first priority being repair of the roof, stage 1 of which will commence within the next few months to make it water tight. The remodeling will include a new entrance, café in the Parish Hall, toilets, including disabled access and the upstairs room, as well as replacing the ancient heating system. Among the works completed this year are:-

- Monitoring the crack in the north-west wall and liaising with Wessex water about rainwater drainage and seeking expert advice on the crack, including securing loose glass in the north window whilst scaffolding was in place
- Levelling, seeding and mowing garden for church children. Ivy and weeds sprayed at front of church
- Design and construction of safety gate near the rear of the church
- Forming up-stands around rain water drainage sumps along the side path where the geological "spring line" makes the area prone to algae and a safety hazard. Gravelling of this path
- Ongoing work with the boilers
- Exterior door painting
- Disposal of old chairs and sofas and installation of new chairs, courtesy of a donation from the Widcombe Association
- Construction of external advertising bill board (Alpha course)
- Incorporating and decorating new Sound mixing desk and ongoing maintenance of stage sound equipment and monitors
- Fitting mini mixer and speakers in Parish hall, initially for Alpha course
- General repairs to lighting (back path, foyer, flood lights in the church) and cleaning equipment
- New anti vermin covers on crypt ventilation openings
- Removal of redundant pipework in the crypt
- Upgrade of CCTV cameras and wiring. Camera door bell fitted to office exterior door

There is still much to do and it is hoped that things will continue progressing with Phase 1 of the roof repairs enabling interior work to be contemplated.

11. Report on the Deanery Synod

Chris Tottle

There have been three meetings since our last AGM, although CT was only able to attend the first two, due to ill health.

The Rural Dean of Bath is the Rev Richard Wilson of St Michael's and All Angels, Twerton and the Assistant Rural Dean until recently was the Reverend Jane Burgess.

1. St Andrew's, Foxhill

The evening opened with a new initiative – the Bath Deanery Magnificat Task Group, which recognises some of the poorer areas of Bath. The City, although widely regarded as wealthy is divided into 62 areas, of which 27 are defined as least deprived. However five areas are defined, on a national scale, as most deprived. Amongst these are Whiteway, Southdown, Twerton and Foxhill. There are several initiatives in place including Christians Against Poverty run from St Andrew's by Amanda Whetton and her team. The food bank has also opened a distribution centre in St Barnabas Church, Southdown. The group was later addressed by the Bishop of Taunton, Ruth Worsley and her husband, Reverend Dr Howard Worsley.

2. St Barnabas, Southdown

The November meeting took place at St Barnabas, which has the largest catchment area for a church, some 13,000. The Rev Kate Sourbut works without a Reader but is ably supported by a small team of dedicated helpers. There are 33 readers in the Bath Deanery, but only six come from the poorer Parishes.

The theme of the meeting - how to bring the good news of the Gospel to our most deprived fellow Christians. Christians against Poverty, and the Foodbank, as well as a special service for young mothers with play groups and pre-school teaching were mentioned. There is communication with the Southdown Centre for Citizens Advice and a newly built large Methodist church.

We were also told of the Bath Deanery Church Planting strategy, a recognised initiative when church numbers are declining and a fresh approach is needed to create a solution. A task Group is in existence of which Tim Buckley is a member.

12. Report on Widcombe Junior School

Elizabeth Easaw (Foundation Governor)

Spiritual development Sub committee .

EE reported that the school are working towards an Outstanding SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools inspection) They currently hold a Good status. The children are very much leading this, with a new safe and calm Reflection room which children have access to during playtime. This years

Easter service was also led by the children with teachers acting as Facilitators. EE reported on an Outdoor Play and Learning (OPL) initiative making children's lives interactive and part of learning. A Play Leader has been appointed for five hours a week, developing an outdoor theatre space and a mini beasts growing area. There has been a very positive response from parents, as there is less conflict with children and more creative and imaginative play.

Achievements

New Key Stage 2 assessments raised issues regarding writing and this has been addressed with good ongoing progress. The school receives a Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) for eligible children from deprived backgrounds which is aimed at closing gaps in achievements and a PP Manager is employed to co-ordinate. Good progress is being recorded.

The Palladium Academy Trust (PAT), of which the school is a member, continues Executive Leadership fortnightly meetings and EE reports that the spiritual side of school life is very much being protected within the PAT.

Other features of school life include the school going through the National Finals to reach the European Robotics Finals, and an award at the Mid-Somerset Festival for Greatest Contribution to music development.

EE asked the assembled meeting to pray for the children, families and teachers involved with the upcoming Year 6 SATS and for the families of those children who are unable to get into the school, due to its oversubscription. In addition, the assembled were asked to pray for the Staff, the Governors, of which a new chair is about to be appointed, and for the Head, Claire Taylor for her encouragement, affirmation and support.

13. Report on Safeguarding

Jill Oldham

There were no safeguarding issues at either St. Matthew's Church or St. Thomas a Becket Church during the past year.

In March, the Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer based in Wells sent an email to all safeguarding officers, recommending safeguarding training level C0 for anyone in need of a basic level of safeguarding awareness. The PCC will discuss who they feel should undertake the hour long online training.

Churchwardens and Chapel Wardens are required to undertake level C1 training. This should take place after C0 training, and comprises attending a half day course at one of several venues offered within the Diocese. One of our wardens will be attending the training on 5th May, and the other three later in the year. All safeguarding training should be updated every three years.

14. Elections Deanery Synod

Carol Tottle and Chris Tottle stepped down and were thanked for their time as Deanery Synod Representatives.

The following were proposed:

Alison Furber	proposed by Judith Harries	seconded by Carol Tottle
Trudy Healey	proposed by Victoria Jones	seconded by Sian Lewis

Both were duly elected by those present.

a) Widcombe Parochial Church Council

Thanks were expressed to Beth Forrester, Nathan Ovens and Chris and Carol Tottle as they stepped down, for their contribution to the PCC over the years,.

Four elected members remain - Trudy Healey (Secretary), Alison Furber (Electoral Roll Officer) Martin Geake, Annette Whateley.

There were additional PCC places and the following nominations:

Louise Sturgess	proposed by Mark Nish	seconded by Tamsin McMaster
Haydn Wilkins	proposed by Liz Holden-White	seconded by Peter Jones
Anne Lawson	proposed by Angie Frith	seconded by Sian Lewis

All were duly elected by those present.

b) Sidesmen

The following existing sidesmen were elected en bloc to carry out the role for the coming year:-

Charles Baines	Angela Hathaway	Rosemary Bulford	Sheila Read
Rachel Levenson	Mary Fooks	Pat Robson	Jonathan Potter
Alistair Durie	Quentin Lambert	Tony Coverdale	Lindsaye Dunn
Fiona Coverdale	Joshi Easaw	David Quine	Elizabeth Easaw
Alison Quine	Emma Harris	Anne Lawson	

15. Appointment of Auditor

After many years, Graham Brown has decided to step down as Examiner and was thanked for all his hard work for the PCC over the years. Going forward, as we have income in excess of £100,000, we move to another bracket, Peter Barton of ART Accountants was proposed as Auditor.

Proposed by Mark Nish Seconded by Sian Lewis
Unanimously voted by the meeting and declared appointed

16. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

17. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer by Tim Buckley

The Meeting closed at 9-00 pm.