

St. Oswald's Church, Fulford, York

Our Mission Statement

To reach out to the Community and beyond with the Christian Gospel, witnessing to God's love through word and action, from an accessible and welcoming centre for prayer, worship, teaching and fellowship.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Tuesday 23 April 2024

at 7pm in the church hall

MINUTES

Present:

Sue Baughan, Carolyn Blain, Richard Borrows, Victoria Burles, Evelyn Courcier, Michael Courcier, Pippa Ensor, Suzanne Esson, Heidi Folland, Wendy Henwood, Keith Hood, Ben Kybett, Angela McClean, Bryan Milner, Lesley Milner, Caroline Moore, Liz Ogram, Roger Ogram, John Riley, Jane Richardson, Gill Smith-Riley, Ali Tuvey-Smith, Jackie Tuvey-Smith, Lorna Weaver Dutton, Louise Wheatley, Ken Wells, Nigel Wells, Andrew Wilson

Chair:

Reverend Canon Sue Sheriff

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

1. Reading and Prayers

Sue Sheriff (SS) welcomed everyone and noted that the meeting was being held on St. George's Day. She considered the story of St. George and the dragon and the one idea held that it represented the slaying of evil and St. George as a protector. She then read from Psalm 91 verses 1-4 which showed the protection that God offered including in overcoming evil.

SS reflected that God had been doing great things in St. Oswald's and how she felt that St. Oswald's had been really moving towards living out the recently adopted strap line to "*Act justly, love mercy, walk humbly with God*". She shared two comments that she had recently received. The first was from a friend whose sister had died in tragic

circumstances and had asked if she could have the service in St. Oswald's and had then come to have a look. She said that as soon as she had opened the door she had found herself smiling. She had loved the bug hotel and the little veggie patch and said that it felt like a church with a real heart.

The second example had been earlier that day when a customer at the café had said she had had a walk around the church including the area at the back and she had felt like it was a church with a beautiful smile. SS offered special commendation to those who did the gardening.

SS then handed over to Pippa Ensor who announced that St. Oswald's had been awarded the bronze eco church award. SS commended and thanked Pippa, Bryan Milner and Michael Courcier and everyone else involved in achieving the award.

SS thanked and commended everyone for their contribution to St. Oswald's and metaphorically "slaying the dragon" and concluded with a prayer.

2. Election of Churchwardens

SS expressed thanks to Bryan Milner for agreeing to continue as Churchwarden and also appreciation for all the work he continued to do for the church. She asked for those present to pray for the right person to come along to take on a role of Churchwarden, not as another Bryan but as an additional person to take on the role in their own way.

SS reminded the meeting of the resolution that would be required for the next APCM to set aside the 6 years' service rule:

"Churchwardens are elected annually under the provisions of the Churchwarden Measure 2001 by the Annual Meeting of Parishioners, as the senior laypeople of the parish and congregation. Their term of office is one year, and they may serve for up to six consecutive terms of office, unless the Annual Meeting passes a resolution to set aside this rule."

Bryan Milner was nominated by Jackie Tuvey-Smith and this was

seconded by Ken Wells and was unanimously supported and carried with two family abstentions noted.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Election of Secretary

Angela McClean was nominated as minutes secretary, for the evening's APCM only, by Heidi Folland and this was seconded by Carolyn Blain and was unanimously supported and carried.

SS encouraged volunteers to take on the role of minute secretary for future PCC meetings and noted that volunteers did not need to be members of the PCC.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Bill Foley, Maggie Foley, Tricia Giltrap, Arthur Pegden, Julia Pegden, Kathryn Well, and Kay Barker

3. Minutes of the Last Annual Meeting – 18 April 2023

All agreed the minutes were a correct record of the meeting. Proposed by Jackie Tuvey-Smith and seconded by Louise Wheatley.

4. Matters Arising

SS explained that Ken Lai had made the difficult decision not to take on the role of Treasurer due to work commitments. Terina Hurley was doing a wonderful job but could not continue indefinitely and it might be time for the church to consider employing someone to carry out the role in the coming year.

SS thanked Jean and Keith Hood for all their cleaning work. Following their retirement Katie Winterton had been employed and was doing a really good job. SS expressed her thanks to Carolyn Blain and Louise Wheatley for stepping in sometimes. SS asked for anyone who would be able to help out with the basic cleaning at short notice on the odd

occasion when Katie was unavailable, to let either Carolyn or Louise know.

SS advised that the hall chairs were to be replaced by new blue chairs as decided by the PCC and asked for anyone that had any good ideas about what to do with the existing chairs (which did need some TLC) to let her know.

There were no other matters arising.

5. Appointment of Officers: PCC Representatives

SS explained that Victoria Burles, Pippa Ensor and Heidi Folland were all due to stand down but had confirmed that they would be willing to stand again. She also advised that although Carolyn Blain had one year of her term left she intended to stand down and she thanked Carolyn for all her support at PCC.

Heidi Folland had been nominated by Pippa Ensor and seconded by John Riley; Pippa Ensor had been nominated by Evelyn Courcier and seconded by Suzanne Esson and Victoria Burles had been nominated by Ken Wells and seconded by Richard Burrows. There was a unanimous vote for all three to continue as PCC representatives.

SS reminded the meeting that it was not too late to stand for PCC and members could be co-opted.

She also explained that Jackie Tuvey-Smith would become a Reader at the end of the year and therefore could attend the PCC ex-officio as Reader. It had therefore been proposed that Jackie Tuvey-Smith complete the one year remaining of Carolyn's term in place of Carolyn. Jackie Tuvey-Smith had been nominated by Lorna Weaver Dutton and seconded by Caroline Moore and there was a unanimous vote for her appointment to the PCC for a one-year term.

6. Electoral Roll Report

Richard Burrows provided an update on the Electoral Roll. He reminded the meeting that the 2023 revision of the Electoral Roll had comprised 99 names but sadly two members had since been removed from the Electoral Roll following their death. One new person had

been added. The number of names on the Electoral Roll was therefore 98 and of those 98 names, 19 were non-resident in the parish.

There had also been one other recent sad death of a long-standing member but due to timing this would be reflected in the revised Electoral Roll for the following year.

SS reminded the meeting of the excellent quote that Bryan Milner had provided at the APCM last year that he had felt summed up the importance of being on the Electoral Roll:

“Being on a Church Electoral Roll is a way of demonstrating your willingness to help shape the future of the Church, not just locally, but nationally and even internationally.”

She added that she felt this had definitely been true during the past year.

SS thanked Richard for his report and Richard left the meeting.

7. Report on PCC Proceedings and Fabric Report

SS noted that most items in the Secretaries Report on PCC proceedings were covered elsewhere in the meeting but she wanted to highlight the following key aspects:

- ‘good place warm space’ had been a really good initiative and she thanked Carolyn Blain and Victoria Burles for all their hard work. She added that it would be good to have other volunteers to take this initiative on for any occasions when Carolyn and Victoria might not be available. She also reminded the meeting of the grant that had been obtained for the initiative and that St. Oswald’s was hoping to receive another grant for this year.
- Revitalise and the fact that the Diocese had put St. Oswald’s forward for participation in it
- the approval of the new strap line after much discussion and the development of the new logo by the publicity team both of which demonstrated the church’s inclusivity
- the introduction of the CCTV, which had been agreed at the last APCM meeting, had already proved valuable, not least that so far no microphones had been lost.

There were no comments on the report.

In relation to the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments Report SS highlighted the good progress that had been made on the quinquennial so far and the new boiler and upright freezer.

Bryan Milner noted that 2023 had been a fairly quiet year with the church's historic assets now in good order and in a condition to enable them to continue in good order into the future due in no small part to all those volunteers who did the cleaning and upkeep in the church. SS advised that the woven chairs had been donated to the Blueberry Academy and Ronnie had been fixing up the chairs. Carolyn Blain noted that her daughter had bought one of the refurbished chairs.

SS asked whether there were any questions or comments on the Fabric Report and thanked Bryan for the report. There were no questions or comments.

8. Financial Statement and Appointment of Independent Examiner; Treasurer and Gift Aid Secretary

SS advised that the Trustee's Annual Report (TAR) had been sent out in advance of the meeting and there was also a copy up in the church hall for reference. She was pleased to advise that despite a budgeted £8,000 deficit the actual result had been a £8,000 surplus. She invited questions. A request was made for another copy of the TAR to be sent out as the copy on the website had been blurred. In addition, the copy would remain available at the back of the church hall.

SS confirmed that the external examiner, Paul Jordan, had given St. Oswald's a clean bill of health with the only comment being that the church should continue to spend the restricted funds as the Charity Commission was very strict on organisations not being allowed to sit on their restricted funds.

SS also advised that the accounts had been managed very well with a £50,000 Free Will Offering last year which the PCC had decided to increase to £54,000 for this year. She confirmed that a deficit budget had been set again for this year which was the sensible approach. SS also explained that in order to be considered for 'one church one

vicar' the amount of the Free Will Offering would be important but was not the only criteria. Other factors considered would include the church's potential for growth and whether it would be better for the particular church or whether indeed it would be better for it to work with another church.

SS noted that the Generous Giving scheme had made a massive difference to the financial position of St. Oswald's. Before Generous Giving the average giving levels were about £13.20 per week, lower than the national average of £14.10 but higher than the diocesan level of £10.10. The current giving level was at about £14.65. Also before Generous Giving there had been 49 planned givers and this had increased to 58 with 9 new regular planned givers. The monthly total had risen from £3030 to £3707. Another benefit was that it no longer fell to the Treasurer to handle gift aid. SS also advised the meeting of the generous gift of £1000 that had been received. SS thanked everyone for their generosity - both generous giving and generous attitudes.

SS explained that the accounts had been seen and examined by the PCC in January and she asked anyone who had any questions to speak to a member of the PCC.

There were no questions on the accounts.

SS advised that Paul Jordan was willing to continue to act as independent examiner. Bryan Milner nominated Paul Jordan for the role of Independent Examiner and this was seconded by Pippa Ensor and there was a unanimous vote agreeing to his appointment.

It was noted that Terina Hurley would continue as Treasurer and Gift Aid Secretary but did not need to be formally appointed.

9. Safeguarding Report and adoption of Policy

In Patricia Giltrap's(PG) absence SS advised that there had been no incidents during the year. She gave a massive thanks to both PG and Pippa Ensor for all their work. SS believed that St. Oswald's seemed to be way ahead of some other churches in the area of safeguarding but that she was not complacent. She emphasised that an important part of mission was keeping people safe. She also noted that St. Oswald's

had moved from Level 2 to Level 3 so was doing well in all areas.

SS explained that it was necessary for the meeting to adopt the Safeguarding Policy and that it then had to be signed by both vicar and churchwarden. However she emphasised that safeguarding went way beyond being a policy and had to be in the church's DNA. She confirmed that no changes had been made to the policy since the version accepted for the previous year and she highlighted the key elements including further work required in relation to safer recruitment.

Ben Kybett proposed that the Safeguarding policy be adopted and this was seconded by Carolyn Blain and the Safeguarding Policy was unanimously approved and it was noted that it would be signed later.

SS also added that other policies were also important:

- the Health and Safety policy from the church's insurers that had been adopted the previous year -it was unanimously agreed to continue with the policy.
- a new social media policy was proposed and SS expressed gratitude to Heidi Folland and Gary Haq for all the social media work they did including on facebook. The policy basically reflected the need to be safe, for any concerns to be addressed to PG, and to be kind, honest, take responsibility and disagree well when posting. No confidential or sensitive information should be released and if anyone saw anything posted that was concerning they should report this to SS, Heidi or Gary. The policy also contained a section on Taking Action if the policy was breached. Jackie Tuvey- Smith proposed that the Social Media policy be adopted and this was seconded by Sue Baughan and the Social Media policy was unanimously approved for adoption.
- CCTV policy -SS reminded the meeting that the CCTV had been introduced for security and that only Bryan Milner and the police (if needed) had access. It was unanimously agreed to continue with the CCTV policy.
- next year a Lone Worker policy would be introduced which was another requirement from the insurers.

10. Deanery Synod Report

SS thanked Andrew Wilson and PG for representing St. Oswald's. She advised that there had been a meeting in April where new members had been welcomed and another meeting in September and she ran through where the meetings had been held and what had been discussed.

11. Presentation of Annual report and the Church Activities report (including any questions)

SS advised the meeting to read the church activities report as it was really encouraging. She highlighted the titles of each report in the church activities including: the really good home groups (previously named the Connect groups); Barnabas Aid and the Mission to Seafarers (and she thanked Gill, John and Wendy); the Sunday school report; the Wild and muddy forest church; Tots; the Community cafes; Time Out; Good place warm space; and the use of the church hall. She thanked all those who were part of the teams supporting the activities and Louise Wheatley for all her work in relation to the use of the hall.

12. Buildings Report

Michael Courcier presented the buildings report and advised the meeting that the building work had been founded on a vision of the church being a warm, welcoming and comfortable place. The initial work had been concentrated on improving the existing fabric of the church and that work had now been completed. He asked everyone involved in that work to recognise the great achievement that had been and to give themselves a pat on the back for their role in the work. This work had included re-roofing the church, the perimeter heating (which had been very successful in drying out the stone walls) and the repair work to the rose window.

He noted that 2023 had been a planning year with associated funding considerations but that now things could begin to happen including:

- in July the work was due to start on the disabled ramp for the church hall. It was also hoped that the replacement of the fabric dividing screens in the hall with solid panel screens would be carried out in the summer before the end of the school summer holidays.
- plans had been submitted to Faculty for the new porch, pull out

kitchen and disabled toilet. The new porch was expected to help to keep the heat in the church and there was also a plan to introduce additional radiators into the nave of the church using the spare capacity of the existing heating. It was hoped that this would all make the church more comfortable and attractive both for the congregation and the community.

- planning permission had been obtained for the work to the wall and railings at the front of the church, St. Oswald's had obtained cover from the insurers for part of this cost and a contractor had been selected so the intention was for the railings work to be carried out during the summer as well. This work would result in the church looking much better from the outside and would therefore benefit the local area generally.

He noted that St. Oswald's would need to raise some more money via both grants and the congregation. He concluded that with God's help and our own work at St. Oswald's the church would be in good shape for the future.

SS thanked Michael and advised that he had gone above and beyond what could ever have been expected of him. Michael credited Bryan Milner as the "details man" and also Sue Baughan's work in relation to the grant applications. SS thanked Lorna for the work she had done in relation to identifying the source of possible grants while she was helping St. Oswald's as an administrator. SS also explained that half of the cost of the wall and railings would be covered by the insurance and also that she had been both touched and delighted that the local community groups had voted for St. Oswald's to receive a grant of £900 for the hall. She additionally noted that Fulford Parish Council was providing a grant of £1000 for the ramp. She had written to all the local groups that were connected in some way with St. Oswald's and they had all given glowing reports. She added that the reputation of St. Oswald's in the community was really growing.

SS also noted that there was £26,000 in the building funds which could be transferred for the new work as well as legacies available in the Churchwarden funds, donations and £10,000 in the Sylvia Hurley fund. She agreed with Michael that it would be necessary to come back to the congregation for some additional funding.

In response to a question about whether any help would be useful from volunteers e.g. for decorating Michael agreed that any such help would be valuable in keeping costs down.

Michael concluded his report by noting that dates for all the work needed to be finalised.

13. Vicar's Report

Sue Sheriff presented her report. She counselled regarding the need for care when discussing the item in her report on the blessing of same sex couples. She noted that she hoped that St. Oswald's was an inclusive church. She referred to the work done by the Church of England in relation to *Living in Love and Faith* and the apology that had been made by the bishops to LGBTQI+ people. SS read from the introduction to the pastoral letter from the bishops of the Church of England: *"We want to apologise for the ways in which the Church of England has treated LGBTQI+ people -both those who worship in our churches and those who do not. For the times we have rejected or excluded you and those you love, we are deeply sorry. The occasions on which you have received a hostile and homophobic response in our churches are shameful...we have not loved you as God loves you, and that is profoundly wrong. We affirm, publicly and unequivocally, that LGBTQI+ people are welcome and valued: we are all children of God."* SS explained that there had been a range of convictions held by the bishops. The historical definition of marriage in the Church of England would not change *"that Holy Matrimony is between one man and one woman for life"* but the church had recognised that loving relationships came in different forms and could be recognised in churches. She went on to explain that the bishops had produced pastoral prayers intended for use as part of church worship services. There were prayers of thanksgiving and dedication and a prayer for God's blessing as well as prayers for use with specific elements of a service, such as a Prayer when Rings are Worn and Prayers at the lighting of a candle.

SS advised that the use of the prayers was entirely discretionary for the vicar and she had wanted to obtain the support of the PCC in this matter. She confirmed that the PCC had given their unanimous support to the use of the prayers in St. Oswald's. SS explained that if used, she would use the prayers as part of the Sunday morning worship and

would tell the congregation in advance that this would form part of the service. SS explained that she did not need the agreement of the wider church on the matter but would like to obtain it. She asked anyone who felt either strongly for or against the proposals to speak to her. She needed to know that this was the direction that St. Oswald's wished to go in.

SS explained that she had intended to table a discussion on the matter but felt it was too late in the evening for such a sensitive subject. She therefore concluded with a prayer and by asking everyone to give her their opinions which she would report back to the congregation.

In relation to the appointment of a new vicar she noted that once all the building work was underway it would be a much better time to attract a new vicar. She referred to a very useful book that she intended to use to help with the process to find a new vicar entitled '*How to make great appointments in the church*' by Claire Pedrick and Su Blanch. She noted that the process would start with prayer for the right incumbent to lead St. Oswald's into the future. The process would also include carrying out an audit of where the church was and drawing up a new parish profile and personal profile for a vicar and then discernment and selection. Input would be obtained from outside St. Oswald's including the Archdeacon and bishops. She was not yet sure of her own timescales but would be happy if was still in her role at Christmas. She emphasised that it was exciting that there would be a new person joining St. Oswald's.

14. Any Other Business

Gill Smith-Riley and John Riley announced that they had taken the difficult decision to move to Scarborough to a home for retired clergy. Gill noted that she had lived there before but that it would be a new experience for John. SS advised that she had appreciated Gill's insight and wisdom and all her knowledge and benefitted from John's prayers. Gill noted that in many ways they would be sad to leave St. Oswald's adding that they had arrived at the church at a difficult time during Covid but had been made to feel very loved and accepted. She advised that they just now needed some more support but noted that they were not moving far away.

In response to a question about whether the sidespeople and assistant

wardens needed to be elected SS confirmed that she had intended to mention this at the item on the election of the churchwarden. She thanked Carolyn, Julia, Wendy, Ken, Lesley (including for her work as vergers), Michael, Evelyn, Kay, Rose, Victoria, Louise Rooke, Catherine, Louise Wheatley, Jean, Maggie and John.

Although they did not have to be formally elected it was unanimously agreed that they should all continue. SS also asked that if anyone else was willing to take on any of these roles they should speak to Lesley Milner.

SS then paid tribute to Roy who had so sadly passed away. She reflected particularly on his beautiful prayers. She advised that his funeral would be held at St. Oswald's on Thursday 9 May at 12.15pm. She remembered Roy and gave thanks and prayed for him.

There was no other business and SS closed the meeting by asking everyone to share the grace.