

ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL SMARDEN

EASTER VESTRY MEETING

**Minutes of the Easter Vestry Meeting held
on Tuesday 24th April 2018 at 7.45pm
in the Charter Hall, Smarden.**

Present:

Rector: Rev'd Alex Bienfait (in the chair),
Curate: Rev'd Catherine Wilson
PCC Members: Thomas Hay , Edward Demery, Michael Barkway,
Vivienne Rose, Tony Lush
Treasurer Ewa Loffstadt
Secretary: Tanya Ling
Parishioners: 25 Members

The meeting was opened with a reading and prayers led by Alex Bienfait.

Alex welcomed everyone to the meeting, business was then conducted as follows:

2. Appointment of Clerk:

Tanya Ling was appointed as the Clerk. Proposed by Brian Bristow and seconded by Michael Barkway. All in favour.

3. Apologies for Absence: Apologies for absence were received from Annette Haynes, Barbara Marchant, Carol Barkway, Pat Lush

3. Minutes of Easter Vestry Meeting 2017:

The minutes of the Easter Vestry Meeting held on 5th April 2017 had been circulated. It was proposed by Jim Carr and seconded by Vivienne Rose that these minutes be approved. All in favour.

4. Election of Churchwardens:

Two nominations for the role of Churchwarden had been received, as follows:

- Edward Peter Demery, proposed by Vivienne Rose and seconded by Jim Carr.
- Thomas Hay, proposed by Vivienne Rose and seconded by Jim Carr.

All in favour.

There being no further nominations, Edward Peter Demery and Thomas Hay were duly elected as Churchwardens with a unanimous vote of approval.

Alex conveyed his warm thanks to both Edward and Tom for all their hard work this year followed by a round of applause.

There being no further business to be conducted at the Vestry Meeting, the meeting

closed at 7.55pm and was immediately followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

Signed _____

Dated _____

**St Michael the Archangel Smarden
Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
held on Wednesday 5th April 2017**

Attendance and Apologies were noted as being the same as for the Vestry Meeting and Alex Bienfait chaired this meeting.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 5th April 2017 had been circulated. It was proposed by David King and seconded by Alex Demery that the minutes be approved by the Chairman. All in favour.

2. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.

3. REPORTS REQUIRED BY LAW

3.1 Electoral Roll

David King, the Electoral Roll Officer, reported that 73 persons were currently registered on the Parish's Electoral Roll for 2017/18, which was 1 more than the previous year.

3.2. Annual Report and Financial Statement year ended 31st December 2017

All reports included in this section, which were the reports required by law, had been circulated with the agenda. This covered a summary of PCC business, a review of achievements and performance, the Secretary's report, Financial statement and accounts and the Deanery Synod report.

Annual Report:

Ministry Team

Alex apologised that the report omitted to include the lay team (John Lowings and Tony Richter) and would like to convey his support and thanks for their contribution this past year.

Learning

The Home Study group in Smarden met regularly last year and Alex thanked both Ruth and David Papworth for their valued work on this. Ruth and David will shortly be leaving the village and the Parish would like to convey their warm thanks for support of prayer and study groups in the parish.

Children and Young People

The continued focus on Active Church was discussed and the close relationship with the Zion Chapel and their participation in ministry in Smarden school which includes school assemblies.

Safeguarding

Julie Lupton and Sian Newman will present to the PCC a new Safeguarding policy shortly.

Fundraising

The Christmas Tree festival mentioned in both the Churchwardens report and other parts of the report, was noted as particularly significant Alex conveyed many thanks for the team that organise this big village event. It is the largest contributor to the church finances in the past year.

Repairs and Maintenance

Recognition of the invaluable work of the FOSC team was raised and warm thanks were given for their contribution

Parish Magazine

Warm thanks were conveyed to Tony Lush and Eric Spear and our new advertising manager Jane Hanson and all the distributors for their work this past year.

Financial Report

During the past year, the treasury role has been handed over from Thomas Hay to Ewa Loffstadt. Ewa started her role from September 2017.

Thomas Hay summarised that last year's financial year was a good one. It was noted that this positive figure was due to unrealised gains on investments which can fluctuate. Income and expenditure were nearly equal which is mainly due to the Christmas Tree festival.

Brian Bristow raised a query on the Stewardship campaign. Tony Lush confirmed that it was a positive result and a figure would be published shortly.

Secretary's report

Apologies were conveyed as this was not included in the report. This should include PCC attendance levels and Matters Arising during the past year.

Joint Account

Expenses paid to clergy, office administration, services upkeep, salaries are paid out of the joint parish account. This account is currently managed by the Smarden Treasurer, but will move over to the Biddenden Treasurer. These represent the second biggest outgoing from our income.

Deanery Synod Report

A motion from Smarden PCC asking for a review for the way PCC members are elected and if they are communicant members was debated by the Deanery Synod and then at the Diocesan Synod. This will next be debated at General Synod in the future.

4. OTHER REPORTS

They had been circulated with the Agenda. Additional comments as follows:

Churchwardens' Report:

Edward expressed thanks to the local community and so many people help with all the work involved. Many thanks to all the people that help with the church throughout the year.

Churchyard: Alex thanked Brian and Marcus and all other volunteers for their continued hard work. Edward thanked Marcus with respect to his generosity with respect to the shed. Thank you to Roy Mortley who volunteers to clear the compost heap regularly.

St Michael's Guild : Peter Haynes requested an additional comment to be inserted in this section with respect to the text on the visit made to Nettlestead place. The £150 donation raised for this visit was given to Ataxia UK.

Church Flower Arrangers: Thanks conveyed to Pat Palmer for the team's great work for the church. Further volunteers for the team would be greatly appreciated.

Tower Captains Report: Tim Munt was thanked for his leadership, encouragement and training of the team.

Any Questions

Responding to a question by Margaret Wheatley, Marcus Palmer explained that he was on the Diocesan Resource and Management committee, and that the committee had noted the concern from parishes about the rising Parish Share. A wide ranging review is taking place, looking at the assessment and collection from individual parishes. Alex reported that at the most recent Diocesan Synod there was a motion that called for a 3-year freeze to the Parish Share and also a review of the way the parish share is assessed for each church. The Synod voted to support a review but rejected a freeze in the increase in Parish Share. Alex explained that he took part in the debate, and while he voted to reject a freeze in the increase in Parish Share, called upon the Diocese to do more to give parishes confidence that the Diocese was a responsible steward of our resources. Next years parish share is already set. Query raised by Tony Lush and Thomas Hay as to whether Diocesan House are looking at making savings in the future to reduce expenses.

Margaret Wheatley felt that the Parish Share had a negative impact on the parish and feels no confidence in the Diocese. Alex discussed that 40% of clergy will be retiring in the next five years so monies are being invested to attract new clergy into the church.

5. ELECTIONS

5.a PCC Members

Ruth Papworth and John Lowings have recently resigned from the PCC as they have moved out of the village.

Ewa Loffstadt was co-opted onto the PCC since last APCM and now proposed by Jim Carr and seconded by Vivienne Rose. All in favour.

Michael Barkway was co-opted onto the PCC since last APCM and now proposed by Brian Bristow and seconded by Judith Hardy. All in favour.

No further nominations. New members always welcome.

5.b Deanery Synod Representatives

Currently we do not have a representative for the Deanery Synod. No nominations were made.

5.c Sidespersons:

The following were nominated en bloc, proposed by x and seconded by x. All in favour.

Alex Demery, Valerie Newing, Marcus Palmer, John Hardy, Brian Bristow, Terry Sherman, Annette Haynes, Joan Mortley, Hugh Perrott, David King, Edward Demery, Carol Barkway, Mike Barkway. John Hardy

Edward expressed his thanks to the sidespersons for their hard work.

5.d. Independent Examiner:

Wilkins Kennedy FKC Chartered Accountants, Stourside Place, Ashford, are willing to continue as Independent Examiner. They are willing to act without charge though there is a proviso that this could change in the future.

Proposed by Eric Spears and seconded by David King. All in favour.

The Secretary was asked to write to Wilkins Kennedy to express the PCC's thanks for auditing the accounts.

6. Rector's Remarks

Alex conveyed his thanks to the Sacristan team (Vivienne Rose, Jackie Seaton and Barbara Spear). Barbara is leaving the team after ten years of service and a huge thank you to her and to the team for their work given to the church.

Thank you also to John Lowings, who has moved out of the village, for his hard work and immense gratitude for all his contributions in the past, that include two terms as Church Warden during a very difficult period, with the sudden departure of two clergy, but also his contribution to preaching and the development of Lay Led worship We will be looking at organising a special service to celebrate his work and say thank you for his churchwarden and PCC membership work.

Thank you to Catherine Wilson who will be leaving the church in the summer. We are having a goodbye service on 8th July 2018. During Alex sabbatical last year, Catherine worked very hard and warm thanks for her commitment and loyalty.

New homes are being built into the village and we look forward to welcoming these new families. One of our PCC targets will need to be to think how we can provide a welcome to those who will be coming to live in our community.

7. Open Discussion

Jim Carr thanked Vivienne Rose and her team for the lovely pew cushions in the church.

Brian Bristow would like to thank the volunteers who raise the church flag throughout the year.

Tom Hay thanked Alex and Catherine for all their hard work and commitment this past year especially Catherine during Alex's sabbatical .

7. DATE OF NEXT APCM: To be advised.

There being no further business, the meeting was finished with a prayer and closed at 8.55pm

Signed.....

Dated.....