

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parochial Church Council of St Nicholas Church Shepperton
held in the Parish Centre
on Monday 27th September 2021 at 8.00pm**

Present: Rev Carole (Chair), Julia Jelley (PCC Secretary)

Margaret Bennet, Guy Blythman, Sylvia Carter, John Child, Jo Child, Hilary Dyer,
Alan Green, Maggie Hammond, Kathy Hodge, Alastair Naish, Doris Neville-Davies,
Mark Steptoe, Lynn Sutton-Bunnell, and Janice Wetherell.

No Apologies were received, though Simon Sheldon was not present

1. Introductions

The Rector opened the meeting with a prayer, and the Lord's Prayer said together. She welcomed the PCC to her first meeting and asked the members to introduce themselves, with the length of time they had lived in the parish and what other aspects of church life they were involved in.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd August, having been circulated, were taken as read and approved with the addition of Kathy Hodge who had been omitted from the list of those present, and the clarification of Item 3 to read "Father Joseph Fernandes had confirmed that people involved in the Bereavement Café would not need DBS checks as their visitors would not be in a one-to-one situation". In Item 10 the last sentence of the first paragraph to be amended to read "as we do not have a lightning conductor"

3. Matters arising

In connection with Item 5 and the question of copyright and live streaming, Kathy had had a further conversation with licensing authority which confirmed that if we streamed live singing and organ music during a service we would be covered by the licence we hold.

4. Safeguarding No issues had been reported.

5. Financial report

Kathy predicted a small general fund surplus this year for this first time in her tenure. It had not been a normal year. Regular giving averages £3,800 per month, with Gift Aid added this increases to approximately £4,600.

The Common Fund meeting is due to take place this week (30th September), but we have not been informed of the deadline for making our offer for 2022. If the deadline is before our next planned PCC meeting, we may have to call an extraordinary meeting. *(Note: we have been informed that the deadline is end of November so we can confirm our offer at the November PCC meeting)*

Kathy confirmed that our offer will not be more than 75% of our basic income, as agreed last year. It was hoped that in time we would be able to meet our Clergy costs of £55,000. Rev Carole commented that our challenge was to increase our basic income so that 75% equated to the full Parish Standard Cost. The Rector said that, after preliminary discussions with Kathy, it was hoped to prepare a budget for 2022 which could be presented to the PCC in November.

The collection at Carole's Induction service had amounted to £522.00 for the Bishop's Discretionary Fund.

The money for the fence round the school having been sent to Milange, it was hoped to see confirmation that the fence was in place and the school opened, as Simon Sheldon had expected. Sadly John had seen some recent footage which showed no fence in place and the school clearly closed.

6. Current restrictions: a review

The Rector considered that, in spite of the downward trend in Covid figures in Spelthorne, it would be necessary to continue with caution and make no major changes this month. Lynn Sutton-Bunnell observed that there were currently 12 positive cases at St Nicholas school. We would continue to take small steps, balancing the anxieties of the vulnerable with the pressure to lift the restrictions. The Choir had returned, and there were two Sunday services in the church. Margaret Bennet asked if the children's area in the North transept could be re-instated, leaving the south transept for adult social distancing. She was supported by Alan Green and it was agreed that the furniture and a limited amount of activities should be brought back for the following Sunday..

Margaret also raised the question of Messy Church, outlining the usual programme of three meetings a term, one of them at Half Term, and the structure of the event. To comply with the restrictions, each family could stay at the same table with the activities being brought to them, or a controlled carousel system could be arranged, with each area being cleaned between users. Safe mixing was discussed and ways of minimizing close contact. Sadly the shared meal would not be possible and families would be advised to bring their own picnic. A very thorough risk assessment should be prepared, mirroring procedures at St. Nicholas School. With these precautions approved it could be possible to hold a Messy Church without further reference to the PCC.

8. Services (as this item followed logically it was taken next)

The Rector said that in a new church she would normally have the opportunity to observe before taking a lead. With no normal pattern in place she did not have this luxury and had begun to plan for the future. Some local churches were offering an 8.00am service on the 1st or 3rd Sunday, so there would be an 8.00am said communion service at St. Nicholas on 2nd and 4th Sundays. The first one would be on 10th October and the service would be reviewed after 6 months. The All-Age Eucharist at the 11.15am service would be arranged on a 1st, 3rd or 5th Sunday. Looking further ahead, the Rector planned a mid-week Eucharist, possibly nearer mid-day. A Sunday evening service might be considered later. Some small tweaks to the liturgy would be introduced. At the 9.30 parish Eucharist, 3 readings would be reintroduced so that we would not miss out on the riches of the Old Testament each week. A gradual hymn/anthem would also be introduced.

Home communion administered by the group of lay pastors had been suspended at the request of the Area Dean and Maggie Hammond asked when it might be possible to start again. The Rector explained this was in hand and she would be calling together the lay team for a meeting to plan this before too long.

As the zoom link would no longer run for people unable to come to church, other methods of connecting to the services would be investigated. The Rector valued this very highly, feeling it important to continue the link which the pandemic had forged.

Turning to occasional services, the Rector explained some alterations to the Service of Light. Last year the service could not be held in person, so people would be invited who were mourning family or friends lost in the past two years. The service will be held on Sunday 7th November at 3.00pm followed by coffee and cake in the Parish Centre. This being in step with the support offered by the Bereavement Café, it was agreed that invitations to the service would also be given to visitors to the Café.

Arrangements for Remembrance Sunday were in hand, depending on whether there will be other services in the area. Moving on to Christmas services, the Advent Carol service was to be on Sunday 28th November and the Carol Service on 19th December, both at 6.30pm. The outdoor Christmas nativity scene had not yet been discussed but would be considered again. Finally there would be an 8.00am said Communion and a 10.00am Family Service on Christmas Day. There would be one said service at 10.00am on Sunday 26th December. The Rector also reported an email from Manor Mead School inviting her to take part in their Harvest assembly and she also intended to visit Thamesmead School in due course. Visits to St Nicholas and Halliford schools are already in the diary.

7. Fun Choir singing in the Parish Centre

Fun Choir had requested permission to resume their monthly evening booking in the Parish Centre. To assess the safety of this John Child had asked the organisers how many people usually attended, whether they wore face coverings, how much singing was done and how they planned to make the event covid-safe. In view of the answers (up to 25 people without masks, singing about 25 songs, not able to space the chairs to the full recommended distance, with connecting doors and roof vents open) the meeting felt that they could not safely permit them to use the Parish Centre at the moment, especially as the Parish Centre would be used the following morning by Roseacre Nursery allowing no time for interim cleaning. However, they were welcome to hold their evening in the church, including the mid-evening pause for relaxed conversation and a glass of wine. The Choir was now singing unmasked in the church and the greater space allowed for more social distancing and a freer circulation of air. The PCC Secretary was instructed to write to Paul Thurtle and pass on the invitation.

9. Bereavement Café

Sylvia recounted the background, the original training undertaken and the covid-related delay in opening for the first time. There had now been three meetings and patterns were emerging. Sadly some of those originally trained have had to withdraw, and so another person has joined the group to deal with refreshments, freeing an additional Listener. The Princess Alice Hospice would be contacted to find out when more people could be trained. The numbers attending had risen from five to nine and as they increase the room could be arranged to accommodate them comfortably.

10. Correspondence.

No correspondence had been received.

11. Churchwardens' Notices

No notices

12. AOB (Previously Notified to the PCC Secretary)

It was reported that Robin Campbell was retiring as a Governor of St Nicholas School and might need to be replaced. The Rector would automatically become a Governor, ex officio.

Hilary Dyer had indicated that she wished to raise the question of the extent of the Diocese's responsibility for maintenance of the Rectory during an interregnum. She deplored the condition in which the new Rector would have found the property on arrival. Due to financial restraints of the Diocesan budget, brought about by the Covid pandemic, only health and safety issues and security issues are currently being addressed. The Rector thanked the parish for agreeing to fund the redecoration of some rooms prior to the family moving on. She reiterated that they were very

grateful and have settled very comfortably into the Rectory. In the matter of the overgrown garden etc the wardens stated that some funds remained in the dedicated Rectory Maintenance Fund and the Treasurer and Wardens would use their discretion in its application.

13. Future Dates

The Rector planned to hold PCC meetings less frequently. Now that the interregnum was over the PCC would meet bi-monthly on the 3rd Monday of the month starting in January of each year, with Standing Committee meeting two weeks before. The next PCC Meeting will be in the Parish Centre on 15th November at 8.00pm and the next Standing Committee on 1st November at 7.30pm in the Rectory. A full list of the year's dates will be circulated.

There being no further business the meeting closed with the Grace at 9.40pm