

Minutes of the PCC Meeting held on

8th November, 2023

At St. Botolph's Church at 2.30 p.m.

A request had been received from the Army Benevolent Fund asking for a donation to their Christmas Concert. It was proposed by Colin and seconded by Jackie that we give them a donation of £200. This was passed unanimously.

The vicar thanked all those who had completed the three courses required by the C of E and in such a short time. Arrangements for DBS checks were being made for the churchwardens and other members of the PCC.

The vicar expressed his delight at the Licensing Service held last month. He expressed his gratitude for the wonderful music and thanked everyone who had had any part in the preparation, during the service and the clearing up later.

The vicar asked if the PCC were still thinking about the outside of the church and how to let the public know that we are open and a worshipping community. As there are restrictions on what can be done to the outside building perhaps the DAC could be invited to a meeting on site to discuss this. This led to discussion about the surrounding area, including the Priory and Britannia Car Park. There was the possibility that housing could be built on part of the car park in which case the houses would be in our parish. Colchester citizens and communities should make their feelings known to the city council.

The vicar asked if the PCC would like to share the Christ Church Office telephone and the parish administrator, would answer for both churches. We already had an email address for St. Botolph's and this could be transferred to the website and to the Christ Church Office.

Reports

a) **Fabric** In the absence of the churchwarden/caretaker, his report was read. The sump pumps which should be removing excess water from the floor of the boiler house were not working and needed to be replaced at a cost of £1,870.48. During the engineer's visit to look at the pumps he smelt gas and consequently the gas supply had to be turned off. To replace a rusting gas pipe will cost a further £1,500.00. All this work will be completed by 20th November. As requested, cleaning companies had been contacted but only one had replied and had looked at what was required. They were prepared to do two hours a week for a cost of £16.00 per hour. As it was considered to be a reasonable cost it was decided to employ them.

b) **Finance** A financial sheet had been circulated. In his absence the Treasurer had sent a few notes of explanation saying that although the accounts showed a healthy balance, this would not be the case for much longer as we had to pay our final Parish Share of £15,025.00 plus all the work going on in the boiler house in the region of £3,400.00. He suggested that Advent would be a good time to tell our worshipping community the facts and to consider raising their financial commitment to the church. The 10th of December was chosen to be the best time before that Sunday's service.

c) **Worship** Revd Emma outlined plans for a mid-week bible study in the Welcome Area for an hour, initially for five Wednesday mornings before Christmas reviewing it again in January. The delivery of cards of which we have 500 would be delivered by the congregation to the parish and elsewhere.

d) **Bookings** Members had been asked to respond after looking at the T & C conditions on hiring the church. The Safeguarding Officer was to make sure the safeguarding requirements are correct.

A.O.B. Colchester City Council is responsible for the maintenance of our closed churchyard had requested the permission of the PCC to allow the trimming of yew trees and others in the interest of safety and visual aspect. David P. had met with Phil Barrow, the city council's representative who had done previous work in the Priory. This work does not need a faculty, just a proposal from the PCC. The Vicar proposed that, '**This PCC approves the Council's proposal to trim back the low canopy of trees within the churchyard in the interest of sight lines and safety.**' This was seconded by Pauline and passed unanimously.

Someone had been asked if it was possible to live-stream our morning services. It was possible but it would need equipment and someone to work cameras. This item would be put on the January agenda.