

St Mary the Virgin Church, West Malling

Minutes of the Vestry Meeting

held on Sunday 30th April 2023 in the Parish Church at 10am.

1. The meeting was opened with a reading from Scripture and an opening prayer
2. Apologies for absence: none.
3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 29th May 2022
 - 3.1. The minutes were unanimously approved as a correct record.
 - 3.2. Matters arising not covered by the rest of the agenda: none.
4. Resolution relating to Churchwardens Measure 2001: noted.
5. Election of Churchwardens
 - 5.1. Clare Innes was proposed by John Musker (who volunteered to be Clare's associate churchwarden), seconded by Seamus Smyth
 - 5.2. Jeff Griffiths (to be assisted by Kathy Griffiths) was proposed by Gail Crutchfield, seconded by Jill Rutland
6. Vestry Charities
 - 6.1. The Ecclesiastical Charity of Sir Robert Brett
 - 6.1.1. Nick Crutchfield that this memorial to Sir Robert Brett provided for a spend of about £100 annually for a lecture. Rev David expressed the hope that a suitable speaker could be found to be invited to give this lecture next year.
 - 6.2. Relief in Need
 - 6.2.1. It was noted that all the trustees were present. The income was £600 last year and there was some £3,000 to £4,000 in the bank. Isobel Macdonald explained that the vestry charity was able to support local people around the parish in situations of need or distress and a number of gifts had been given in the last year. If anyone knew of anyone in need, they could speak in confidence to Rev David or any of the Trustees.
 - 6.3. The Malling Memorial Institute
 - 6.3.1. It was reported that the MMI had five tenants including West Malling Parish Council. Its building is at 9, High Street, West Malling, and it supports young people and children with grants for both groups and individuals. It manages the building and the trustees consist of a mix of church-going and non-church-going people.
 - 6.3.2. Nick reported that Lesley Bays had taken on the role of treasurer of the MMI and that he had stepped down as a Trustee.
 - 6.3.3. The meeting expressed its thanks to Nick for his work and his report.
7. The meeting ended with the start of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting .

St Mary the Virgin Church, West Malling
Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
held on Sunday 30th April 2023 in the Parish Church
following the Vestry Meeting at 10am.

1. Apologies for absence: none.
2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 29th May 2022
 - 2.1. The minutes were unanimously approved as a correct record.
 - 2.2. Matters arising not covered by the rest of the agenda: none.
3. Closing nominations for PCC.
 - 3.1. The Chairman announced that there were three vacancies and two nominations had been received.
4. The Reports
 - 4.1. Electoral Roll
 - 4.1.1. The Chairman reported that in 2022 there were 95 on the roll, an increase on the number in 2021.
 - 4.2. Financial Report
 - 4.2.1. John Denny, treasurer, reported that
 - 4.2.1.1. the highlight of the year was the very healthy state of the restricted music fund, which had received some fantastic financial contributions
 - 4.2.1.2. with regard to the capital project fund, also restricted, the bottom line was distorted by the large sums involved, and
 - 4.2.1.3. with regard to the general funds for the day-to-day running of the church, the outgoings had increased very substantially owing to the soaring cost of lighting and heating, and extremely high gas bills; at the same time the income had not increased and if anything had slightly fallen. As a consequence the general fund was running at a loss.
 - 4.3. Churchwardens' Report
 - 4.3.1. John Musker recorded the churchwardens' gratitude for the support they had received and confirmed that there was nothing outstanding. Work on the roof and the electrical equipment had been held back pending the reordering.
 - 4.3.2. The Chairman reported that on the capital project the input of the diocese was awaited, and that in the aftermath of the pandemic a substantially cheaper project was under consideration

- 4.4. Deanery Synod Report
 - 4.4.1. Jaki and John Musker reported that the main topics for discussion had been the establishment of the team of seven churches benefice and the recruitment of Rev Helen Burn as Rector.

- 4.5. Diocesan Synod Report
 - 4.5.1. The Chairman reported the arrival in the diocese of Bishop Jonathan whose feet were already under the table and who would get established in 2023 and thereafter after a year of transition.

5. Elections and Appointments
 - 5.1. Election of PCC: with Yvonne Smyth stepping back the following were elected:
 - 5.1.1. Lesley Bays, proposed by John Musker and seconded by Seamus Smyth and
 - 5.1.2. Jane Field, proposed by Seamus Smyth and seconded by Mary Gibbins
 - 5.2. Appointment of Independent Examiner
 - 5.2.1. The Chairman reported that, in the absence of any indication that Alan Gibbins intended to cease acting, he would ask Alan Gibbins if he was prepared to continue as Independent Examiner.

6. Questions and open discussion on matters relating to the life of the church
 - 6.1. Nick Crutchfield reported that the tower was equipped with eight bells, five of which dated to the 1600s and three to the 1800s. The tenor bell (1869) is cracked and sounds awful. Normally only six bells at most are rung, but for the coronation the hope and intention are that all eight will be rung. It would cost £10,000 to recast the tenor bell, and £5,000 to repair it by welding. He expressed the hope that a bell might be donated.

7. Thank you!
 - 7.1. The Chairman recorded his thanks to everyone for their support, prayers and encouragement.

8. Any Other Business: none

9. Closing prayer: the meeting was closed with a prayer from the Methodist Prayer Covenant service.

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