

St Matthew's Church, Worthing

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Wednesday 26th April 2023, 7.30pm, in church,
also live streamed.



Attendance: 56 in St Matthew's

Chairman: Rev. Paul Taylor, Vicar

1 WELCOME: Paul Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting and Joe led us in singing 'Great is Thy Faithfulness' Paul then opened with a reading from Psalm 89 and prayer.

2 APOLOGIES: There were apologies from Lucy Ashton, Russ Bravo, Jonathan and Liz Frank, David Hill, Terry Purser, Suzanne Rugg and Angela Standen.

3 ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS: Philip Rugg and George Rackham were both elected unanimously. Paul thanked Judith Slaney for her four years of service and Philip Rugg who has done his first year.

Nominee	Proposer	Seconded
George Rackham	David Todd	Brenda Bateman
Philip Rugg	Chris Spanton	Mark Purser

4 ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE PCC: Paul thanked Julie Mason, Pam Normansell and Maureen Rackham who have served on the PCC for three years and are standing for re-election. He also thanked Oliver Smith-Boyes who has been the minute secretary for the PCC.

Nominee	Proposer	Secunder
Julie Mason	Chris Cox	Catherine Nevill
Pam Normansell	Judith Slaney	Pam Denman
Maureen Rackham	Matt Bramley	Nicole Beard
Virginia Santer	Phil Taylor	Al Pitcher

All four were elected unanimously. Judith Slaney will be co opted onto the PCC as the former churchwarden.

5 DEANERY SYNOD ELECTIONS (Three vacancies for three year term)

Paul thanked Al Pitcher and Philip Rugg who have served for three years and are standing for re-election. They were elected unanimously. There remains one vacancy if anyone else is interested in representing St Matthews at Deanery level.

6 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 2022 APCM: There were two minor corrections to the Minutes of the APCM on 27th April 2022. The approval of the Minutes was then proposed by Paul Taylor as Chairman and accepted with one abstention. Paul then signed the minutes.

7 MATTERS ARISING: There were no Matters Arising.

8 WRITTEN REPORTS: The written reports had been circulated by email and printed copies were available. Paul noted that they comprised a very encouraging record of the many aspects of church work that had taken place during the twelve-month period, (May 2021 – April 2022) and invited any comments or questions.

Mary Parish said it was encouraging to see how much is going on in the parish.

Suzanne (?) commented on the breadth of age ranges.

Clive Latter said they showed how much had changed since Covid, and how many new things had developed.

David Todd asked how close we were to the fundraising target for the hospital in Nkuru. Paul said we have reached our tithes of £11,000 and were well on the way to £14,000. Paul then proposed that all the reports be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS: David Todd asked about the Mural on the side of 99 Tarring Road. It's beginning to deteriorate and he asked if it would be possible to preserve it. Paul T said it would be a question for the PCC at the next meeting.

10 ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT: Jackie Harris gave the report as the new Electoral Roll Officer.

Eleven names have been added to the roll this year and 7 names removed which brings our new total to 180. Jackie reminded people that names can be added to the Roll at any time during the year and encouraged anyone new to the church to fill in the appropriate form.

Eileen Andrew and Joyce Holcombe have both passed away during the previous year. Paul led a prayer of thanks for both Eileen and Joyce and prayed for their families and for those close to them.

11 ANNUAL REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

After giving the report Ginny asked for any questions on any of the accounts. Tom asked if we were facing a deficit of £32,000 – the budgeted £10,000 plus the additional £22,000 deficit. Answer: No, the £22,000 is the total deficit we anticipate.

David Todd asked where the money would come from to cover the deficit, would it come from the Reserve Fund? Answer: Yes, there is money available in the Reserve Fund, but we need to increase our giving if we can. Paul added that this is something we need to pray about. A growing church is always on catch up – as numbers increase, we need more resources, which means we need to increase our finances and so on. He urged people to think about their giving, but not to feel pressured if they were unable to give more.

11a: Receive the PCC Trustees' 2021 Annual Report: Paul T proposed receipt of the Trustees' report: all in favour, none against, no abstentions.

11b: Receive the 2022 Annual Financial Statement: Paul T proposed receipt of the 2022 Annual financial statement: all in favour, none against, no abstentions.

11c: Receive the Independent Examiner's Report on the 2022 Financial Statements: Paul T proposed that the accounts be adopted. Unanimous in favour, none against, no abstentions.

11d. Re-appointment of the Independent examiner for the year ending 31st December 2023: Paul T proposed that **CJ Wells FCA** be re-appointed as Independent Examiner. All in favour, none against no abstentions.

Paul thanked Ginny for doing an amazing job, stepping into the role of treasurer whilst Phil was ill and for being willing to continue as treasurer. He then thanked Angela Standen for her valuable role as bookkeeper. Angela has indicated she would like to step down from this role, so Paul asked that anyone interested in taking on this position would get in touch.

12 CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT – Presented by Judith Slaney and Philip Rugg.

Phil

In December and January, Judith and I undertook the annual check of the church inventory and terrier. The inventory is a list of all the items belonging to the church while the terrier is a list of land and buildings belonging to the church. This was presented to and accepted by the PCC at the January meeting. I have also been keeping a log of works undertaken on the church in the church log book. A summary of work can be found in the Fabric report.

Every five years churches need to be inspected by an approved architect who produces a report on the state of repair of the church. Our most recent inspection took place on 13th April and was completed without any major issues. We are now awaiting the report.

Judith

This is the first year since covid hit that we have been able to run a full programme without any restrictions and we have made the most of it with a very full calendar.

We started in May with a garden party for our local community to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's platinum jubilee. Thanks to Maureen and her team for all the planning and preparation which made this event so successful. Sadly this was followed in September by another momentous occasion, the death of Her Majesty the Queen. The church was open every day until the day of the funeral. We provided a book of condolence, candles and a quiet space for prayer and remembrance. Thank you to all those who shared in welcoming many people to the church, providing refreshments and a listening ear when needed.

Phil

A major project last summer was the church re-equipping. A very generous gift from David and Sandra Hill and an anonymous gift allowed us to replace the lighting, do extensive work to the AV system - including installation of the new screens - replace our chairs with more convenient, stackable ones and smooth off the pillar bases.

Thank you to all the many volunteers involved in the work that has been done on the buildings over the past year and thank you all for your patience during the necessary disruptions that have taken place.

During the World Cup we showed a few of the matches on TVs in the Youth Lounge and the Rackham Room providing a pleasant opportunity to enjoy (or not) England's matches together.

Judith

We have continued with our two services each Sunday with the opportunity to share over coffee between the

services thanks to Lynn and the coffee team. It has been great to have live music every week thanks to Joe, the worship team and the tech team who also stream both services for those unable to attend in person.

Our four duty wardens have done a sterling job in making sure the church is open, safe and welcoming first thing and then staying to ensure the church is shut down and locked at the end of the morning, many thanks to them. We continue to have a good team of greeters who greet new people as they arrive and point them to the service leaders or wardens, thank you to them for providing that important welcome.

Our regular church events have all returned this year, with the Fun day in September, the harvest lunch and no tricks just treats in October, the Christmas meal and extra Christmas services in December and earlier this month the Easter adventure and Easter services. Wildfires and the men's gathering both took place as real camping this year, these are important times when friendships and faith blossom. None of this takes place without a great deal of planning and preparation, so many thanks to all those involved especially Maureen and the catering team.

There are so many other regular things that happen throughout the year, I don't have time to mention them all but please read the reports that were sent out before the meeting to see what goes on and where you can get involved. Again these all depend on a lot of people giving their time, so thank you all.

The community choir now meet in the hall and although we lost the regular booking by Slimming World (due to lack of customers) we have gained a weekly exercise class, which along with our other regular hirers and increasing numbers of children's parties means the hall provides a growing income when not being used by church members.

Phil

We were delighted to welcome Jackie Harris onto our staff team as our Office Coordinator earlier this year. She has already proved to be a great asset to the running of the church.

This year we have seen some exciting new events and initiatives starting up at St. Matthew's.

- Wisecraic, organised by Russ Bravo, is a comedy and discussion evening at a local pub based around a topical theme providing an opportunity to invite Christian friends into a relaxing and enjoyable environment.
- On Monday evening is the opportunity to come and play Table Tennis.
- Women@StMatts have organised a number of events since restarting in November, including a pudding night and a craft, cake and coffee morning. They look forward to welcoming more women in the summer.
- Transforming Lives for Good is a programme to provide mentoring to primary school age children who are in danger of being excluded from school. Five members of St. Matthew's have been meeting with one child each at Heene Primary School since last summer providing activities and an opportunity to talk with some great results.

On behalf of everyone who is blessed by these events, we would like to thank everyone involved in making these happen.

Judith

This is my last APCM as church warden and I will finish by saying it has been a privilege to serve in this way for the past four years, this year alongside Phil and earlier with Peter. Thanks to both of them for being so easy to work with.

I also want to thank you all for the love and support you have given me along the way. And a special thanks to Paul whose energy and enthusiasm are contagious. Thank you Paul for your trust, encouragement and

guidance. You have taught me a lot.

Finally, I give thanks and praise to our amazing God for his faithfulness in equipping us to manage all the opportunities he provides to us here at St. Matthew's. My prayer is that we continue to listen and respond to his promptings as we seek to reach our local community.

Questions for the churchwardens:

David Todd asked what happened to the book of condolence for the Queen. Answer: It was returned to the Diocese.

David then asked what the architect had said about the collapse of the tower in the church hall. Answer: The architect was looking only at the church, but the repair of the church hall tower is on the agenda for the next PCC meeting.

13 VICAR'S REPORT:

Someone coined the phrase 'perma-crisis' in one of the newspapers – the situation where one crisis in turn causes another and that, another, like dominos falling. Living in crisis becomes the norm.

Covid, overstretched services, schools, NHS, police and the courts – the cost of living crisis – strikes – it certainly feels like that.

In the midst of all this our work feeding the hungry, creating community and above all sharing Jesus is crucial. The numbers calling on St Matt's meals has increased rapidly this year. Lynn and I delivered food to a family and it was like scene from Dickens – thin children, a tired thin looking mother, a squalid flat. One team member who visited the same family went back to her car and cried. Recently we had four requests from different families for meals in one day. We are struggling to keep up. Holiday Lunches has also taken off in a big way this year. At least as important as the food, are the relationships made. The families who come, are becoming a community.

Our aim is to create a network of community where people see each other at more than one group.

St Matt's meals, Holiday Lunches, our school and community events, the Sparklers toddler group, Coffee on the Corner, youth drop in and crucially - of a piece with all this - the 11.15 service are now overlapping and interconnecting. It's just the first fruits but I believe we can love our community with Jesus' love. Much of this work is done by 9.30 people whole heartedly serving. Our strategy has given a way-in for many of you to serve in ways that you might not have imagined. That's what the Kingdom does – Jesus the king opens our horizons and gives us real purpose. We are in for the long haul in this, and it is hard work. I believe that God sees that and that we bring him pleasure and glory as we serve.

The community choir, coffee on the corner, our Men's and Women's work, Cameo, Comedy Club and Wisecriac, and both 9.30 and 11.15 services are places that have that inspiring quality where we can confidently invite friends and neighbours to engage with us. Let's get inviting!

Alpha and Life Groups enable us to connect and grow – the pastoral visiting team keep the housebound members in touch.

God has provided for us in wonderful ways this year – the Re-Equip Project has transformed the church. Such a wonderful memorial to Jason and Stuart Hill. The anonymous gift for audio speakers has given us much improved sound, and a grant for the sofas and sitting areas added to the appeal of the social areas of the church and enhanced its flexible use.

We have been so blessed by our preachers and everyone who takes part in our services. I have never been in church with so many excellent speakers who give everything to their preparation and delivery. Thank you. Our

Worship Team and music have gone from strength to strength this year, again we are so blessed by all who lead and by our hard-working tech team.

All these different people use their gifts with hours and hours of preparation. Why? because they are enabling us to enter the very presence of God. It is that important, a calling and ministry, and we give thanks for them.

Reading the parish reports 'Faith, Hope and Love' are the words that come to mind for me. Thank you to everyone single one of you for all that you are and do. We are on a great journey together and God is at work in us and amongst us.

We are being the good news of Jesus, and we have good news to share. And that is crucial. The biggest gift we can give anyone in this world is to lead them to Jesus. He is the answer to their deepest need. Our next four Sunday talks will help us think about this some more.

I am enormously grateful for the Churchwardens.

For Phil Rugg coordinating the big building project this year and numerous other projects backed up by a really active, and skilled, building team.

And for Judith's four years of wise thoughtful service. She has been a real leader amongst us. So much has happened in the last four years, covid, changes of staff, new ministries launched and encouraged. Thank you so much, Judith.

And I look forward to working with George who returns as Churchwarden after a rest – its like bringing a seasoned centre forward off the bench!

It is great to have Jackie on board as our new coordinator and to share ministry with Joe and Clive. We are very blessed to have such a great team. We have our different areas of responsibility, but we all contribute to many other leadership needs. Thank you for passion and your committed ministries.

Finally - Thank you all for your friendship and fellowship. We are all involved in a partnership.

Paul sums it up so well in Philippians...

³ I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴ In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

God is at work amongst – we don't always get things right, but he is always faithful and can be trusted if we keep our eyes fixed on him.

Let's pray.

Paul then asked for any questions on his report.

Penny Frank: Could we have a bit more information about the next Alpha will work.

Answer: Paul is encouraging everyone to watch the Alpha videos and has a Holy Spirit Day planned which will be live in church. He wants to do Alpha again this year, but wonders if we perhaps need something different for those coming to church for the first time and who have very complicated lives. It might be we need to think about one-to-one mentoring.

Clive Latter added that they are not using Alpha with the young people because youngsters are not asking who God is, they simply don't see why God matters.

Paul T suggested we are in a cross cultural mission field now in the UK.

Jenny suggested Christianity Explored as an alternative as that is aimed at a different group to Alpha. Paul T said it was a good course, but we need something even pre that.

Peter and Mary Parish thanked Paul for his leadership this year. Mary said she was grateful for Paul's encouragement. It makes a difference and we all owe him a great deal. Paul responded by saying it was a privilege to lead such a great group of people.

14 Closing Prayer: Paul T closed the meeting at 8.30pm