

St Michael & All Angels, Offham Vestry Meeting

will be held on Monday 22 April 2013
in the Methodist Hall from 8.00 p.m.

Agenda

1. Reading from Scripture and opening prayer
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 23 April 2012
 - 3.1. Approval as a correct record
 - 3.2. Matters arising not covered by rest of the agenda
4. Resolution relating to Churchwardens Measure 2001
5. Election of Church Wardens
6. Any Other Business

St Michael & All Angels, Offham Annual Parochial Church Meeting

will be held on Monday 22 April 2013 in the Methodist Hall
immediately following the Vestry Meeting

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 23 April 2012
 - 2.1. Approval as a correct record
 - 2.2. Matters arising not covered by rest of the agenda
3. Closing nominations for PCC and Deanery Synod
4. The Reports
 - 4.1. Electoral Roll
 - 4.2. A report on the last year for the PCC and the parish *David*
 - 4.3. Financial report *James*
 - 4.4. Churchwardens' Report *Stephen & Mike*
 - 4.5. Diocesan Synod Report *David*
 - 4.6. Deanery Synod Report *David, Jane*
5. Elections and appointments
 - 5.1. Election of Deanery Synod rep - 2014 is next election year unless by-election.
 - 5.2. Election of PCC
 - 5.3. Appointment of Child Protection Officer
 - 5.4. Appointment of independent examiner
6. A word about our future direction as a church *David*
7. Questions and open discussion on matters relating to the life of the church
8. Any Other Business

ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, OFFHAM
Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting held in the Methodist Church Hall
on Monday 23rd April 2012 at 8.00 pm

PRESENT: David Green, Chairman & Priest-in-Charge; Becky Clifford, Acting Hon Secretary; Colin Wolfe, Methodist Representative; 12 Parishioners

1. The meeting opened with a reading from Psalm 126 and prayers.
2. There were no **Apologies for absence**.
3. **Minutes** of last year's meeting
 - 3.1. **Approval as a correct record.**

The minutes of the last APCM were approved after one minor amendment, proposed by James Graham and seconded by Stewart Betts.
 - 3.2. **Matters arising.**

There were no matters arising.
4. **Election of Church Wardens**

Under the terms of the churchwarden's measure a churchwarden can only do six years maximum unless the APCM resolves to allow otherwise. The meeting was content for Mike Rowe to do another term. Mike said he was happy to stand for another year, but would like somebody to replace him in the long-term. There were 2 nominations for churchwardens; Stephen Betts nominated by Phil Raggett and seconded by Jane Jordan; Michael Rowe nominated by Jane Jordan and seconded by John Lander.
5. **Any Other Business**

No matters were raised, and the meeting closed.

Signed
Chairman

Date _____

ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, OFFHAM
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on Monday 23rd April 2012 immediately following the Vestry Meeting

PRESENT: David Green, Chairman & Priest-in-Charge; Becky Clifford, Acting Hon Secretary; Colin Wolfe, Methodist Representative; 12 Parishioners

1. There were no **Apologies for absence**.

2. **Minutes** of last year's meeting

2.1. The minutes were accepted as a correct record with two minor amendments: proposed by David Godfrey & seconded by Jane Jordan.

2.2. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

3. **Closing nominations for PCC and Deanery Synod**

3.1. The nominations for PCC and Deanery Synod were closed. David explained that the Church Representation Rules set out a three year rotational system to ensure continuity and also encourage new voices. Unless the parishioners at the APCM decide differently that becomes the default modus operandi. The length of service is initially drawn by lot. he confirmed that six places are available.

4. **The Reports**

4.1. **Electoral Roll**

It was reported that there are 44 names of the Electoral Roll. This is down five from 2010, due to deaths and people moving away.

4.2. **A report on the last year for the PCC and the parish**

David wanted to thank God for all that has taken place during the last year. He noted that a brief look through the many highlights listed in the APCM paperwork should encourage us that there is a great deal of work and service going on in the name of Jesus. It is such work, not least amongst our children, teenagers and families that means we can look to the future with some anticipation and faith in all that God has for us as a community of believers and in our work to reach those around us in this parish.

David expressed his thanks to all those who contribute to the life and work of our church. He paid particular tribute to our Churchwardens for their leadership, quiet unerring service and their wisdom in leading through the Interregnum, keeping our buildings in excellent condition and for taking care of their clergy!

He also thanked all those who give financially to support the church and all those who make use of their time and skills to contribute. For all those who work with our children and teenagers, for those involved in pastoral visiting, to Dennis our organist, those who read and intercede or serve on Sundays, to Peter Barnett and our Lay Reader Margaret who assisted David with duties, to our PCC members, Deanery Synod representatives, those that organize events, those who write in the parish magazine (especially Mike Rowe alongside Becky Clifford of course), those that clean St Michael's, those that provide their expertise with the flowers, those that cater at special events, people who organise fund raising activities and to the sides-persons who offer a welcome to all who join us on Sunday for worship, we say thank you so much.

4.3. Financial report

James Graham described last year as 'quite uneventful' from a financial point of view; there was no significant expenditure, appeals or fundraising. There was a surplus of £2,742 which was mainly due to not having an Incumbent stipend to pay. Giving was at a comparable or higher level than last year and Gift Aid produced a significant amount of income. James currently applies for Gift Aid biannually. Income from fees was very low in comparison with previous years, due to the interregnum.

£7,385 was received over the year. St Michael's continued to give to a variety of charities. Expenditure increased due to the increase of the Parish Share (around £800); the previous year the Parish Share had been frozen so effectively there had been a double increase. Insurance costs have increased over recent years; the church was revalued and that had resulted in a higher increase in insurance premium. Sequestration costs included contributions to the refurbishment of the vicarage in West Malling and advertising costs for the post of the incumbent. It was an atypical year, so it couldn't really be used as a basis for comparison.

The Friends of Kent Churches 'Ride and Stride' produced quite significant income. £41,482 remained in funds: the income and liabilities almost cancelled each other out.

Mike asked if the atypical year would impact on the Parish Share. James responded that the outgoings were significantly down, the income was slightly up and the electoral roll was down so the Parish Share should reduce in 2013. David Green asked if there was a Parish Share estimate for 2012 yet; James said it had increased to £4,600 from £4,400.

On studying the figures it was noted that sundry donations with the alms boxes was significantly higher. James said he would look into this and report back.

4.4. Churchwardens' Report

Stephen Betts thanked Mike for being an excellent churchwarden. Mike considered it quite gratifying during interregnum that the numbers attending were maintained and remarked it was interesting to have a variety of people leading and preaching. Planned giving increased too. Prayer meetings kept happening to keep the spiritual life of the church going. The appointment process went very successfully including the production of the parish profile and showing the candidates round all the parishes. The inside of the church hasn't been decorated for a long while and is flaking in places. Stephen Betts said it was an interesting time and thanked God for leading us to appoint David Green. We could see God's hand in the appointment process; now the hard work starts and we need to focus our thoughts and energies on how to go forward in partnership.

4.5. Diocesan Synod Report

Diocesan Synod was dominated by two items in 2011; women in the episcopate which was overwhelmingly voted for in all three houses. It was now back to General Synod for consideration of how to deal with those who disagree. Votes seem likely to be close to 75%. The second item was the Anglican Covenant drafted at Ridley Hall; it was hoped all provinces would sign it. It was drafted by Jim Robinson who was appointed Bishop of New Hampshire. It was a useful document; however all those in the developing countries rejected it; there was no point if they didn't buy in. Diocesan Synod rejected it (in spite of a plea from Bishop James) as did most other dioceses. Budget discussions not as heated as in previous years although there was recognition there are issues surrounding parishes who either refuse to pay the Parish Share or cap their contribution.

4.6. Deanery Synod Report

Deanery Synod gave women in the episcopate its unanimous support. Synod voted not to vote on the Anglican Covenant because there was insufficient information; Mission statement vision for going forward. Jane Jordan asked if Jim Brown would be serving as Rural Dean. David replied that Bishop James had asked Jim to do another year on top of his five years and he has agreed to do so to let the large number of new clergy in the deanery to adjust to their new settings.

5. Elections and appointments

5.1. Election of Deanery Synod Representative

Jane Jordan was elected to Deanery Synod last year and continues to serve until April 2014.

5.2. Election of PCC

The following were proposed and seconded as detailed below:

Stewart Betts	Mike Rowe/Jane Jordan
James Graham	Stephen Betts/John Lander
David Godfrey	Mike Rowe/Jane Jordan
Phil Raggett	David Godfrey/John Lander

As there were four nominees for six seats, all were declared elected. The Chairman explained it was possible to co-opt further members later on.

The Chairman noted that we are currently without an Honorary Secretary. James Graham confirmed he was happy to continue in his role as PCC Treasurer.

In regard to the new three year system, and in line with the guidance in *Church Representation Rules*, lots were drawn amongst the new PCC members for their length of service:

Three years (till April 2015): David Godfrey

Two years (till April 2014): Phil Raggett

One year (till April 2013): James Graham, Stewart Betts

5.3. Appointment of Child Protection Officer

The Chairman proposed that Linda Graham should be appointed as Child Protection Officer for 2012. Those present and eligible to vote agreed.

5.4. Appointment of independent examiner

The Chairman proposed that Brian Jones should be appointed as independent examiner for 2012. Those present and eligible to vote agreed.

6. A word about our future direction as a church

6.1. David Green noted that in future years he would like to change the dynamic of the APCM so parishioners could think mostly about the future rather than focusing on the past. How we can move forward as a church? Ideally, the paperwork should be available earlier to allow people to absorb it prior to the meeting. He noted that a vision of the future was something the members of the congregation need to discern alongside him. To that end, he has provisionally booked a meeting space at St Martin's Chelsfield, on 30th June 2011. Using material from *The Healthy Churches Handbook*, which concentrates on seven common threads that marked out growing churches, as a basis for priorities and targets to address. It would be led by Canon Jean Kerr and all are welcome to attend.

- 6.2. David's first impressions was there were four questions to ask on the spiritual front.
- 6.2.1. In terms of worship, how can we make it excellent and accessible?
 - 6.2.2. How can we help our building to help us in our worship?
 - 6.2.3. How can we look at the place in which we live: our home, our village, the school, the area around the Green and the village service with fresh eyes?
 - 6.2.4. How could he as your Priest encourage people to grow? Margaret Moore has done much more preaching. How can I encourage others (not just those authorised in ministry) to grow? (the greenhouse effect of nurturing talent).
 - 6.2.5. Signage: as the church is on the outskirts David wondered if there was any scope for some signage in the heart of the village and /or even at the school.
 - 6.2.6. Since the church is right next to a farm where a number of people from Eastern Europe are present; it may be appropriate to translate service liturgy into the main languages; so you could find Romanian side by side with English.
 - 6.2.7. Children and families are hugely important; we need to encourage them as much as possible. If the kids are happy the parents will be happy too. How can we encourage the Sunday School teachers more? How can we include them in services? Family services and Harvest Festival have been important in bringing the whole church together.
 - 6.2.8. The lack of a toilet facilities impacts on service attendance. PCC needs to put some serious thought into this.
- 6.3. David explained he wouldn't have taken the job on if he didn't think they were were viable churches with a vibrant future. He expressed the hope all would join him in discovering all that the Lord has got in store for us.

7. Questions and open discussion on matters relating to the life of the church

- 7.1. Anne Betts noted the porch was terribly drab; it needs looking at and revamping; it's not just a historical building but a living vibrant church.
- 7.2. Joy Kemp runs a Youth Group near Ditton; and there were invitations to join together for specific events. David agreed much was to be gained by joining with others but it was important for youth in the village to maintain the connection with St Michaels.
- 7.3. With worship, it was no good trying to do something that is incompatible with the building. It was a fine line between making it family friendly and alienating the more traditional members of the congregation. Not having a separate space for the Sunday School made life tricky and to provide something at Offham for that age group was physically very difficult. What is the future for them given that the numbers are small? Looking within the community as a whole there are opportunities. Teenagers want to spread their wings. For Offham to be able to cater for teenage children, it should regard cluster as an important resource. All of the churches are stronger for the mutual support and encouragement of one another. Since Offham is a village of only 750 people so there are limits for expansion, not least being the capacity of the church building in Offham.
- 7.4. Eileen Rowe asked if there was any development on the appointment of a third person at Kings Hill. Since Pat Dickin's appointment she and David had been working together to understand what the gaps are. David Green was not convinced that House for Duty Priest was the right answer. There were discussions about a Pioneer Curate or Church Army Captain. The parsonage house at Kings Hill is currently unoccupied.

- 7.5. Mike Rowe noted St Michael's is running short of red hymn books particularly with music in. He suggested thought be given to investing in new hymn books. David Green was unsure for a number of reasons. Several scenarios were possible. In the long term music within the church will be going in a different direction as Dennis is getting older. Many churches make use of technology to provide music. Margaret Betts noted it would nice to have more up to date songs. David admitted he was not really into music; but said it was important whether singing old hymns or contemporary songs that they theologically say something as people remember what they sing. If you find yourself singing during the week what was sung last Sunday it is feeding the soul.
- 7.6. Adult house groups. Jane Jordan asked about David's vision for the housegroups going forward; people have really enjoyed mixing; particularly for Kings Hill and Offham; cross fertilize a little bit.
- 7.7. Margaret Betts noted David was passionate about reaching out to people. He said he was converted to Christianity at 18 from a non-Christian background; helping people who don't know Jesus to discover who he is. David felt that to enable that to happen there must be good liturgical worship; a move towards excellence in worship as much as we possibly can so people feel uplifted. He thought the use of technology, although a personal passion, might need to be put to the back burner for a bit. The great strength of the Church of England; is that when people think of church they think of dog collars and pointy buildings, which is what the Church of England has. The challenge is to get stuck in and start to change it so that people can find Christ.
- 7.8. Steven has a couple of keen people coming back to work this year.
- 7.9. Mike Rowe mentioned the link with Estonia; Peeter Kaldur, our link vicar from Johvi, Estonia was keen for people from our Benefice to visit but it had been ruled out for this year. We are open to that possibility in 2013. Those that go will have to be prepared to rough it a little bit. David G explained it is important to see church in a different parts of the world where the fall of communism is still having an impact.

8. Any Other Business

- 8.1. Mike Rowe and David gave a vote of thanks to Colin for hosting the meeting.

9. Closing prayer

The meeting closed with a **prayer and the Grace.**

Signed
Chairman

Date