

## PARISH OF SUTTON WITH SEAFORD

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held  
in St Leonard's Church at 11.00 am on Sunday 28th April 2024

**Present:** Revd James Hollingsworth (Vicar), Revd Derreck Lee-Philpot (Associate vicar), Fred Bass (Churchwarden), Elizabeth Morgan-Jones, Paul Waller (Treasurer), Stephanie Baker (Secretary) and 56 parishioners whose names are listed with these minutes.

**1) Welcome and Prayer :**

The Vicar welcomed everyone to the meeting and the LyCiG prayer was said:

*God of Mission Who alone brings growth to your Church, Send your Holy Spirit to give Vision to our planning, Wisdom to our actions, And power to our witness. Help our church to grow in numbers, In spiritual commitment to you, And in service to our local community, Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**2) Proposal to combine the two meetings:**

It was agreed that the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting should be combined on a **proposal by Revd James Hollingsworth, seconded by Julia Lawson and carried unanimously.**

**3) Apologies for absence:**

There were 16 apologies for absence which are listed with these minutes.

**4) Reception of the Electoral Roll Review.**

At the time of the meeting the electoral roll numbered 303 (compared to 304 in 2023, 296 in 2022, 295 in 2021, 300 in 2020, 316 in 2019), 10 members died and there were 9 additions.

**5) Tabling of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022:** The minutes were received having been approved at the PCC meeting on 10th May 2023.

**6) Annual Reports for 2020.**

a) **Safeguarding**

Ruth Saunders report was included in the annual report, appended to these minutes and widely available prior to the meeting. There will be a face to face training session in St Leonard's Church on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May at 11.30 concentrating on identifying domestic abuse. The meeting recorded thanks to Ruth for her work with safeguarding.

b) **Children, Youth and Families:**

A comprehensive report can be found on pages 8-12 of the annual report appended to these minutes. Images of various groups were projected during Stefan Bracher's report. Current group attendances average:

Tots: St Luke's 23, St Leonard's 17

Chosen: 8 adults

Alpha: 15 adults

Sparks: 30 young people

Ignite: 50 young people (this is the limit and some have to be turned away)

Messy: 25 children but up to 100 on special days

Glow: 9 children

Ignite join with St Michael's, Newhaven and Seaford Baptist youth groups for youth services and some Ignite members attend regularly, there was also Beach Church, Holiday Club.

None of this would be possible without the loyal volunteers who work so hard to support Stefan.

Thanks to them all were recorded. In 2023 the CYF team reached 400 children and 280 adults. It is not possible to expand the work without employing a second youth worker; this would cost £240k over 3 years. Available grants are being explored but help is needed to write grant applications from people with experience in this. Even with a second CYF worker more volunteers are needed.

All those at the meeting who have volunteered with CYF work were asked to stand and applauded.

Questions were invited but there were none.

c) **Parochial Church Council proceedings and general activities:**

The Trustees Annual report was available physically and on line before the meeting and is appended to these minutes.

The PCC met 6 times during the year and two votes was undertaken by email. The Standing Committee met by Zoom bi-monthly. The minutes of meetings are available on request and routinely displayed on both Church noticeboards.

d) **Statement of Financial Affairs and Balance Sheet:**

Paul Waller whose report is on page 22 of the annual report appended to these minutes began by thanking:

Bob Carrington for regularly counting, recording and banking the cash donations received.

Anna Owen for entering receipts and expenditure and claiming gift aid from HMRC and dealing with the Seaford for Ukraine fund.

Charlene Hobbs for booking and organising bookings at St Luke's

David Bramley for gas, water and electricity usage at all 3 sites each month.

Charlie Christie and Tony Willer for invoices and Fitzgerald Charity work

Chris Tyler for examining the accounts.

Everyone who donates to the parish

The parish has benefited from generous legacies over the year and is the reason we do not face a deficit of £110k. Parish share and Salaries are the biggest expense at £230k, expenses £10k, Mission £7k which uses up the whole of our pre legacy monies. £88k goes to run the churches with utility bills and general expenses and on top of that are repair bills such as the £13.5k for tower repairs in 2023. There is a deficit of £10k per month and giving needs to increase, we need more members and everyone who can to add an inflation increase to their giving.

Questions were invited:

Q1. Thank you for the report. Why is the salary of the St Leonard's organist almost three times that of the Worship Leader of St Luke's? The service pattern has changed and the St Luke's organist does a great deal. Has this been reviewed?

A. It will be reviewed

Thanks were recorded to Paul for his continuing diligent work.

e) **Fabric and Furnishings of Church Buildings:**

The fabric team is led by Michael Holmes, the full report is part of the annual report, page 19. Thanks to Michael were recorded to Michael and Fred Bass.

Fred Bass added further information regarding the sale of the hall:

Planning permission for 3 houses on the site of the hall having finally been granted after a delay of almost a year the hall will go on the market in May through agents Graves Son and Pilcher. It is hoped to raise £400k towards the reordering of St Leonard's. Both planning and ecclesiastical permissions will be needed for the reordering. Fred has written an article for the next edition of Seaford Scene to explain the project to the town. There has been a meeting with the Church Building Council and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and a report is awaited.

Questions were invited, there were none.

Thanks to Fred were recorded

f) **Parish Groups and Ministries:**

Group reports are included in the annual report.

Questions were invited. No questions but a request made for more people to volunteer as church sitters at St Leonard's during the week.

7) **Elections:**

a) **Churchwardens:**

**Fred Bass, proposed by Rev James Hollingsworth, seconded by Janet Kent, unanimous.**

**Elizabeth Morgan-Jones, proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass, unanimous.**

b) **Deputy Churchwardens, for information only:**

**St Leonards:** Janet Kent, Paul Waller

**St Luke's:** Jo Lalla, Paul Bloxham.

c) **PCC:**

James thanked Bridget Anderson, Anna Grimble and Michael Holmes standing down from PCC (Michael to be co-opted to PCC as fabric team lead). The following new members were elected:

**Ann Richards, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass, unanimous**

**Diana Dixon, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded Derrek Lee-Philpott, unanimous**

**Paul Bloxham, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass**

**Elaine Day, Proposed by James Hollingsworth, seconded by Fred Bass**

**Deanery Synod:**

There were no Deanery Synod elections

d) **Sidespeople:** The list of sides people was displayed for information only

8) **Appointment of independent examiners:**

**Proposal: C R Tyler be appointed as independent examiner. Proposed by Revd Lucy Hollingsworth, seconded by James Hollingsworth, unanimous.**

9) **Vicar's Remarks:**

A full copy of the vicar's remarks is appended to the minutes.

James welcomed all, especially those attending APCM for the first time. He hoped people reading were impressed at how amazingly busy we are as a Church and at the comments from different people who have been glad of the support of the Church. We are not here for ourselves but for everyone. He hoped new people were finding ways to get involved in terms of time or financial giving and finding a blessing in it. He mentioned various groups and thanked those who made them possible especially the Church Watchers who keep St Leonard's open regularly for those who visit needing company or space for prayer. This is what is driving the internal re-ordering project and, after a year of frustration we are now getting closer to starting the work. He encouraged all to keep praying because when we get there it will make a big difference to how St Leonard's is able to be a blessing to this town.

St Luke's too has great projects going on, particularly the garden project. For all our projects we will need grants and there is a need for those with grant application writing skills.

There have been many positive comments on our YouTube channel, the Sunday services, Thought for the Day and Evening Prayer on Facebook. Thank you to the amazing tech Team who make it possible.

There is massive amount of youth work going on which will continue to be a key area for our money, time and prayers. There is also a great deal of quiet pastoral work that goes on keeping each other in contact with the groups they are part of and in our prayers when they aren't well. James asked everyone to read the report and turn it into prayer, that God will continue to bless each group, giving thanks for people's generosity and asking for wisdom to use aright the money we are given, the grants we apply for and in the projects we've started.

All then joined in the LyCiG prayer again.

10) **Questions, Comments, Discussion:**

- i) PCC were asked to stand to be recognised and thanked
- ii) Electoral Roll, the report quotes 304, the correct number is 303 when the roll revision was closed. It since risen to 306.
- iii) The chair of trustees for Fitzgerald Charity thanked the parish for support with administration, especially Charlie Christie, Tony Willer and Heather Rice.
- iv) Stefan Bracher asked to give details of Parish Camp. – Saturday 24 – Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August in Chiddingly, costs £55 3 days camping, 3 day tickets £45, 1 day ticket £18 to include activities and food. The programme of activities is coming. Flyers are available at both churches. Volunteers are needed for kitchen and worship teams. Booking is on line but anyone finding this difficult should contact Stefan for help.
- v) Prayer Ministry: a reminder that prayer ministry is available at both churches every Sunday.

11) **Forthcoming and Recent Events:**

- a) **Licensing of Lay Ministers:** Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Chichester Cathedral. Julie Carrol, Nicola Ferguson and Bob Rice received their certificates.
- b) **Intergen Opera:** St Leonard's Church, Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May
- c) **Ordination:** Carole Darling will be ordained Deacon at Chichester Cathedral on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2024. She will serve in the parish as a self-supporting minister for 3½ years, working 2-3 days a week including Sundays. A video introducing her was shown and can be found on YouTube.
- d) **Sabbatical:** Revd Derreck Lee-Philpott will be on sabbatical from 22<sup>nd</sup> July to 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024

12) **Closing Worship:**

The meeting closed with the hymn 'Love Divine all Loves Excelling' and prayer and ended at 1.30 pm.

Signed:

Date: