

Holy Innocents Church, Great Barton

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

30th May 2023

Those Present : Rev'd Benjamin Edwards (Chair), Kathy Drakes, Mary Edwards, Tim Frost, Betty Holdgate, Richard Jarman, Molly Lumley, Claire Mackichan, Ilva Maxey, Angela Pearce, Reinhild Raistrick, Peter Robinson, Doris Sawyer, Jane Dalton

Apologies for Absence : Tiz Tiffin

Fr. Ben opened the Meeting with prayer.

1. *Minutes of the last Meeting, held on 16th May 2022*

The Minutes of the APCM held on 16th May 2022 were unanimously accepted.
Proposed by Kathy Drakes, seconded by Peter Robinson.

2. *Electoral Roll*

Peter Robinson, who has very helpfully taken on the management of the Electoral Roll, reported that there are 85 people on it – an increase of one (Richard Jarman) He will report this to the Diocese

3. *Annual Report*

Fr. Ben gave a very good, thought provoking summary of his contribution to the Report.

Looking ahead, we will review the Easter Services for next year – those on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday were poorly attended. We will look at their timing. Easter Sunday in both Holy Innocents and St. Peter's had been very good, with a large number of children attending the St. Peter's Family Service. Hopefully we can do something similar with the children here and engage with the school, and perhaps in the autumn start "Messy Church". Fr. Ben is continuing the good relationships he has with both primary schools as governor and leading collective worship weekly.

We want to extend our ministry to the wider community We have a three-point plan -focusing on Youth and Family, deepening our Prayer Life, and Modelling Eco Approaches.

We are hoping next year to have a Seekers Course for ten weeks - “Introducing Christianity”.

We have joined “Inclusive Church”, welcoming LGBT people or those from other racial heritages, disabled, neuro-diverse etc., and having a considered and holistic welcome to all people.

Fr. Ben thanked the Churchwardens and Peter Robinson for all their hard work and most valuable support. He mentioned, too, that Kathy Drakes will be licensed as a Reader in September, and she will be most helpful. She and our ordinand on placement, Dr. Karen Smith, have given us some excellent sermons. He was very grateful, too, to Annie Wallace and Charles Gorer and the Windows Committee for the unstinting work they put into the highly successful fundraising concert. On another note, he greatly appreciates the invaluable help of the retired clergy, Rev’d David Crawley and Rev’d Mark Hunt, in covering services and in any other way.

Mary Fawcett has resigned from her Safeguarding Officer work. We have greatly appreciated all she has done (in this and in many other ways) and we need to find another person to undertake this role.

He mentioned, too, the deaths of Alf Nightingale and Marie Bass who had given such help to our two Churches over many years.

Fr. Ben said many more things which expressed the growth of our Church, towards its becoming a “vibrant garden for people to walk in” as we seek to deepen our prayer life and support Holy Innocents with prayerful presence.

On another matter, Tim added that he and Colin Tiffin had been discussing how best to put on record the large contribution made by the Friends for our Windows renovation. They want to make it a public presentation, so that Holy Innocents will benefit. They are in the process of agreeing to do this on the 29th June when Kirby Voices are giving a concert in the church, and perhaps a photo could be taken.

Tim noted that five owl boxes have been placed in the churchyard, and with this and our wildflower area we are adding to our ECO strategy. We could consider, as regards energy saving, installing solar panels. Peter and Tim attended a Webinar given by the Diocese regarding this, and installation by 2030. Hopefully in due course we can have a survey done to see whether this could be part of our energy saving strategy.

4. *Financial Report*

Kathy Drakes gave a report on the Church's finances.

Our bank receipts from December '21 to December '22 totalled £352,713, while our payments were £61,538. The reason our bank balance is so high is that we received two legacies, one for £1,000, another for £300,000 (interim payment) Both have gone into our Fabric Fund.

Regular giving is down by £4,000 a year, with ongoing implications for our GiftAid Tax Claim. This is the third year that regular giving has dropped. Kathy is concerned that if this trend continues, it won't be long before we are in real difficulty. We should not be depending on fundraising to pay our day-to-day expenses. We need to be on a more secure day-to-day footing. Kathy noted that we do not have any fundraising for the running costs of the Church Institute. We should consider certain costs such as the heating of the Institute, at a PCC meeting.

Kathy would like to form a small finance committee to look at ways in which we could improve our regular income moving forwards.

We have been able to meet our Parish Share of £37,307, and most of our other expenses remain very much the same as 2021.

5. *Independent Examiner*

Kathy and Tim met the proposed Examiner of our accounts, Neha Thakkar, four days ago. She didn't think there would be a material change to the information on our sheets of accounts, but they haven't actually been audited yet. She may be able to do this herself, if not, she could put us in touch with someone she knows.

Kathy is awaiting information from the Charity Commission and the Diocese, and the permanent appointment of an Examiner will have to be revisited at a PCC meeting. She and Tim will keep us up to date.

6. *Reports of various Church Organisations*

These had been on our website and at the back of the Church for some time, and everyone was pleased to read them. Warm gratitude was expressed to all those involved in organising the activities or dealing with specific matters, and undertaking the work involved.

7. *Election of PCC Members*

Charles Gorer, David Sheppard and Ann Wallace have had to step down, and we are most grateful for what they have done. Tiz Tiffin's health is not good, but she hopes to continue

Nine members were unanimously elected, as follows :

Kathy Drakes – proposed by Linda Scoles, seconded by Jane Dalton

Mary Edwards – proposed by Angela Pearce, seconded by Chris Drake

Jane Dalton – proposed by Peter Robinson, seconded by Ann Wallace

Betty Holdgate – proposed by Jane Dalton, seconded by Ann Wallace

Richard Jarman – proposed by Peter Robinson, seconded by Linda Scoles

Claire Mackichan – proposed by Jane Dalton, seconded by Ann Wallace

Peter Robinson – proposed by Angela Pearce, seconded by Linda Scoles

Linda Scoles – proposed by Jane Dalton, seconded by Angela Pearce

Elizabeth (Tiz) Tiffin – proposed by Peter Robinson, seconded by Linda Scoles

(Tiz hasn't been in circulation due to health problems, but we are keeping this place open for her and we hope she will want to remain on the PCC)

(Tiz has decided to remain on the PCC, and we are very pleased)

8. *Election of Deanery Synod members*

Two members were elected unanimously : Betty Holdgate - proposed by Jane Dalton, seconded by Peter Robinson; Angela Pearce – proposed by Jane Dalton, seconded by Peter Robinson. The other PCC members were asked to consider whether they would like to be members, but Jane has since seen in a letter from the Diocesan Secretary that our maximum number of representatives is two (as we have less than 100 on our Electoral Roll).

9. *Date of Next Year's APCM*

It was thought good to hold the APCM in mid April, and it was arranged for Tuesday 16th April at 7 pm in the Church Institute. (Easter is on April 1st)

Fr. Ben closed the Meeting with prayer