

Report (ii) Secretary's Report: the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally 2020-2021

The PCC have continued with the pattern of meeting as a 'shadow' joint PCC with St Cuthbert's, Hebron. We hold bi-monthly meetings. The Standing and Finance Committee (SFC) meets bi-monthly as well. Since the last APCM in October 2020 all the meetings have been held via Zoom. There have been three meetings of the 'shadow' JPCC and two of SFC.

We have welcomed two new members to the PCC since the last APCM; Nigel Jobson and Sarah Mills. There are currently two church wardens; Richard Addison and Sean Fugill. We thank them for all they have contributed to our church life.

General administration and financial affairs

The focus and main priorities of the PCC during this year have been:

- Continued work towards a joint governance structure for the benefice
- Ensuring good stewardship of our financial resources particularly in decisions taken about parish share
- To allocate distinct responsibilities for key areas of governance and compliance within the PCC
- To ensure best practice in terms of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

We have made good progress towards a scheme for the united governance of the benefice in a single, united PCC. We are most grateful to Sean Fugill and Janice Robinson who have expertly advanced this work with support from the diocese.

We thank Carol Thompson for her tireless, meticulous work in managing the church finances, especially for all that she has done this year in moving to a new format for the presentation of the accounts. We also thank Peter Rose for his continuing support for the church in his role as Gift Aid Secretary.

To further develop our understanding of the scope of the responsibilities of the PCC and to ensure that all necessary areas are covered, the members of the PCC have been working on a 'roles matrix'. There is still work to be done but we plan to have a named person providing leadership and oversight for all these areas of responsibility.

Liz Hawkins has taken on the role of safeguarding officer for Mitford. We thank her for all the work she does in this crucial role.

Roger Napper has worked tirelessly in his role as churchyard registrar and the PCC wishes to record their thanks for all that he has done. We also record our huge thanks to Richard Addison for all the work he does to maintain our church building, especially for the thorough preparation that went into the reopening after our long closure.

Oversight of Church life

The PCC has a duty to collaborate with the Priest-in-charge in promoting the mission of the church and in sharing and implementing its vision. The focus this year has been:

- To support Alyson and the ministry team as they have worked so hard to ensure weekly acts of worship have been provided, online or in person
- To share the oversight by allocating individual responsibility for areas of church life such as discipleship, children and families, evangelism and outreach.

Members of the PCC rejoice in all that our church family, under the leadership and guidance of Alyson and the church wardens, has accomplished in such a challenging year. Here are just a few examples:

- A benefice-wide Alpha course, running January-April 2021, hosted online and facilitated by St Thomas' Church, Newcastle.
- Benefice-wide home group meetings following a course run by the Bible Society
- The opening of our churchyards for Remembrance Sunday and Christmas with installations to engage the whole communities organized by the Anna Chaplains
- 'Comfort and Joy' bags distributed to more than sixty homes before Christmas, 'touring carols' and Brass and Carols to take the good news of Christmas to our wider community.

The JPCC wishes to thank all who worked hard to serve these and other initiatives with the aim of making God's love known.

Bev Morris

April 2021

ANNEXE

A. PCC Governance and Administration

The parish of St. Mary Magdalene Mitford together with the parish of St. Cuthbert Hebron forms the Benefice of Mitford with Hebron. The Benefice is located in the Deanery of Morpeth within the Archdeaconry of Lindisfarne, the Diocese of Newcastle and the Church of England.

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Officers of the PCC - as of the APCM **October 22nd 2020** :

1. Priest-in-charge

The Reverend Alyson Lamb. The Priest-in-charge is a member of the PCC *ex officio*.

2. Elected Members

Churchwardens: Richard Addison, Sean Fugill.

Deanery Synod Representatives: Ann Attwood, Nigel Jobson (elected 2020)

Ordinary Members:

Group 1, elected until 2021 Dick Quinby Carol Thompson

Group 2, elected until 2022 Bev Morris

Group 3, elected until 2023 Mary Dowswell , Sarah Mills.

2 new members were elected at the APCM 2020, (Nigel Jobson, Sarah Mills) and one member re-elected. (Mary Dowswell).

3. Ex officio Members

Members of the clergy who hold a Bishop's Licence to the Parish are *ex officio* members of the PCC. Licensed Readers are also eligible for ex-officio membership of the PCC, by agreement and appointment of the PCC.

The Benefice is currently served by the following lay ministers (*who either hold a Bishop's Licence or the Bishop's Permission to Officiate (PTO), or who are in training to be licensed*):

Licensed Readers: Sean Fugill, John Laurensen, Liz Hawkins

Retired Readers (with Bishop's PTO): Paul Kidd, Janice Robinson

The PCC has determined that the body of licensed Readers be represented at PCC in the church year 2020-2021 by Sean Fugill and Janice Robinson.

4. All PCC Members and any other person who could be understood to be a 'manager' of the activities and affairs of St. Mary Magdalene Church Mitford are deemed fit and proper persons under the terms of the Finance Act (2010).

B. PCC: Purpose, Structure, Policies

Purpose

The PCC is the leadership body of the church, responsible primarily for the general administration and financial affairs of the church, including maintenance of the building and compliance with regulations and policy for health and safety for all areas of church life, including safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PCC maintains oversight over every aspect of church life and has a duty to collaborate with the Priest-in-charge in promoting the mission of the Church, and the implementation of the parish's Vision and Mission Action Plan.

Structure

In 2020-2021 there were two **churchwardens** in post. The Churchwardens are officers of the Bishop, elected on an annual basis and are eligible to serve for a total of six continuous years. The elected representatives to **Deanery Synod** hold seats for a three year period. Two **readers** represent the body of lay ministers who are either licensed or who hold Bishop's Permission to Officiate. Three groups of **elected members** serve on a three-year rotating basis.

Regular worshippers are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and to consider serving on the PCC. The procedure for election of PCC members is set out in the **Church Representation Rules** (latest edition 2020). The PCC appoints a **Vice Chair**, a **Treasurer** a **Secretary** and (if required) Deputy Churchwardens. In 2020-2021 Sean Fugill served as Vice Chair, Carol Thompson as Treasurer and Bev Morris as secretary. Peter Rose continues to support the PCC as Gift Aid secretary. For his faithful and consistent service, also to Hebron parish, the PCC is most grateful.

Historically the PCC has convened and overseen a number of sub-groups who manage different aspects of the life of the church and report to the PCC. These groups have included: Safeguarding, Building and Fabric, World Mission Partner support, Pastoral Visiting, Music in Worship and Communications. While membership of these groups is not limited to members of the PCC, the PCC is represented on each group by a member who can speak for the group at meetings of the PCC, and ensures that the subgroup presents a written report to the PCC on a regular basis.

The Standing and Finance Committee acts under the authority of the PCC and as an executive arm of the PCC. It has a role in preparing business and financial reports and policy to bring to the PCC. As a smaller group it facilitates the discussion and development of ideas and possible strategies for consideration by the PCC.

Membership of the Standing and Finance Committee comprises: the Priest-in charge, the Churchwardens, the Treasurer, the Secretary and two elected PCC members.

'Shadow' Joint PCC

During 2020-21 we have operated as a 'shadow joint PCC' with Hebron. The purpose of this is to work towards full integration into a single, Benefice PCC - as soon as ecclesiastical law would facilitate such integration.

Policies

Implementation and review of the following policies are among the PCC's top priorities:

Safeguarding

The parish recognises and takes seriously its responsibility for the safety of all members of the church. It takes steps to ensure that ALL are aware of the need for those who are involved with children and vulnerable adults to be appropriately vetted to ensure safety at all times for these groups. There is an appointed Safeguarding Lead who has responsibility for arranging training for all who work with these groups. In 2020-2021 the Parish Safeguarding officer was Liz Hawkins.

Health & Safety

Issues around Health and Safety are closely monitored in all areas. There are policies in place and a **Compliance Diary** maintained to ensure that standards of safety are kept at the highest level Training to maintain standards are arranged. Food handling is closely monitored at all times. There is a full training programme in safety at work in such areas as working alone or at heights. Fire Safety training is regularly provided.

Risk Assessment

With proper preparation and planning the PCC looks to minimise the threat of any action or event that will adversely affect the ability to achieve planned objectives. Appropriate assessments made to plan for such risks. The Risk Assessment Lead in church year 2020-2021 was Janice Robinson.

Insurance

The Church is insured by Ecclesiastical Insurance.