

Lay Chair Summary

The purpose of the Lay Chair Summary is to communicate what is being discussed at PCC meetings to the St Paul's staff and congregation. There are of course minutes taken at these meetings, which are available to all, but these only really capture actions and votes so that we have an official record of our administration of church business. They can be a little dry... Hopefully this summary will therefore bring a little more life to the work that the PCC is doing with our Vicar, Simon.

At the final meeting of the PCC for 2016, the main course of business was to sign off on the church budget for 2017. Before that, we had the great pleasure of voting in our new Treasurer – Alex Starling. We are immensely grateful to Alex for stepping up at a time of great stretch for him; he and Anna welcomed lovely little Flora into the world earlier in November. Congratulations to Alex and Anna for that, and congratulations to the PCC on the addition of our new Treasurer.

Our Finance Manager Anne-Marie presented the budget, supported by the Finance Working Group. Various line items were discussed – we were delighted that two loans have been paid off. This is a huge achievement. There were also two things of particular strategic interest: first, we listened to David and Oli as they presented their thoughts around the importance of building a budget not just for running 'business-as-usual' within the church, but one which supports the growth of our mission. This is a delicate governance question for a PCC. On the one hand we are accountable to the diocese (and the congregation for that matter) as responsible stewards of the church's resources. And on the other we are called to be radical – radically missional, radically generous, radically reliant on God. We agreed that we would return to this throughout next year.

Second, we talked about the risks to the budget. And at this point the entire PCC was unanimous about one thing – not one of us had a clue what Simon was talking about when he flagged that the Quinquennial was due next year. Viv suggested that Quinquennial sounds like something out of Star Wars, and the PCC nodded nervously. Simon patiently explained that Quinquennial is simply an event which happens every five years – and every five years, the church property is inspected by the CofE for potential liabilities. In particular, we are conscious that the perimeter wall of the church property is in bad repair and could incur a significant bill. Having recovered our composure following the threat of an imminent attack of intergalactic Quinquennials, the PCC asked Anne-Marie to prepare a robust property strategy.



In other news, the PCC signed off on two HR policies – Remuneration and Exit Interviews. The Time Off In Lieu policy will be reviewed by Sue and HR Working Group at their next meeting and presented at the next PCC. We acknowledged the tremendous contribution of Alex Brown throughout her three years at St Paul's, and while we are very sorry to see Alex leave for a new life in the New World, she leaves with our prayers and our sincere thanks for her significant role in the life of the church, particularly these last 12 months.

From a governance perspective, there were two key points. First, we do now need to elect a Church Warden. The process for this is as follows:

- Churchwardens must be elected at a meeting of the parishioners. Candidates for election at the meeting must be nominated and seconded in writing by people entitled to attend the meeting (ie members of the electoral roll).
- Notice of the place, date and hour of the meeting must be affixed on the main door of the church for no less than two Sundays prior to the meeting.

Parochial Church Council Meeting

Monday 24th November 2016, 7.30pm



This process will be initiated early in the new year.

Second, we agreed as a PCC that we would each try to find time to attend weekly staff meetings – Cindy is coordinating this for us. This is primarily a chance for us to support the staff in prayer and presence; but it also allows an opportunity for the PCC to improve its understanding of the day to day realities of church life. Simon says that if we show up to two or more meetings a month he will buy us a chocolate cookie (*NO I DIDN'T – Simon*).

Last but not least, the PCC were immensely grateful for their Secret Santas from the staff! What a hugely generous gesture that was. I was particularly grateful for the small bottle of port to help me through the sleepless baby nights... Josiah has never slept better.

On behalf of the PCC I'd like to wish all of the staff – and all of the St Paul's community – a truly joyful and blessed Christmas.

Yours,
Francis

** We would also like to note as a PCC our grief at the passing of our dear Sandy Meaney. Sandy was a beloved and faithful friend to the staff and congregation of St Paul's for many years, always presenting a warm and welcome grin and hug. As Luke Bretherton commented at the memorial for Michael, a saint is someone who brings you closer to the glory of the Lord – and Sandy did that for countless people every day, not least with that megawatt smile. We lament her loss deeply, and stand with Barry, our brother Ash, and the family, in prayer and mourning.*

Present:

Rev. Simon Downham (Chair)
Francis Woods (Lay Chair)
Rosie Brown (Church Warden)
David Bell
Alyson Evans
Max Harris
Sue Hussey
Rosalind Kainyah
Helen Parry
Bob Read
Viv Thomas
Oliver Wright

In Attendance:

Cindy Heughan
Anne-Marie Lewis
Alex Starling

Apologies:

Rachel Campbell-Colquhoun
