

**Annual Church Meeting of All Saints Stranton
16th May 2021**

There were 24 people in attendance at the meeting in church. One person attended via Zoom. Apologies were received from six people.

Annual Meeting of Parishioners, 2021

1. **Prayers** Rev'd Dr Norman Shave opened the meeting with prayer. *Living Lord God grant us your wisdom and guidance in our deliberations and in our decisions this day. Thank you for our church and for all who are involved in it. We pray for your blessing upon them, we pray for your guidance and your leading for them and particularly for all who take up lay positions of leadership in our church. We pray for them in Jesus name. amen*

2. **Election of Church Wardens**

We have received nominations for two churchwardens. As many of you know Angela is standing down as churchwarden this year as she's been in office for six years

The two nominations we have received are for Peter Anderson and Rohan Waduragala and there being no more nominations Peter and Rohan are duly elected.

Angela thanked everyone for the assistance she has received over the six years in office. The churchwardens have lots of responsibilities and cannot do everything without help from others. Thank you for all the help you have given us.

Norman presented Angela with flowers Thank you Angela.

This concluded the meeting of Parishioners which was declared closed.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2021

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Received Joan Herbert

2. **Minutes of APCM 7th April 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th October which had been viewed and commended by PCC were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Ken Shepherd - all in agreement.

No matters arising, no questions asked.

3. **Vicar's Report**

This report is about 2020 which has been one of the most challenging years for all sorts of reasons, obviously associated with the coronavirus pandemic. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to church life during this period it, has been really difficult for everybody, thank you. We are still finding ways of allowing people to access things online as well as meeting together in church

Worship did continue on line and in person when we were allowed to meet. We've adapted to technologies but sometimes that has been a struggle. We began by streaming from home and have now learnt various things about streaming from church. I would never of imagined 15 months ago streaming a funeral from the crematorium but these days, if the family wants streaming that's offered to them for free at Hartlepool crematorium.

We have attempted to stay in contact with one another with delivery of notice sheets and phone calls thank you to those who continue to be part of that distribution team. Michelle is continuing to work in this area together with the pastoral team to try to ensure contact and encourage people back into church. St Matthew's CC re-opened and then closed again. It is now re-opening slowly. It's good that Barbara has come down for our meeting today, welcome Barbara. Barbara left the St Matthew's committee towards the end of 2020 although, because of restrictions it took a while to

hand over the books. Barbara has been amazing in terms of St Matthew's CC, fundraising, with grant money improving the hall massively. Thank you Barbara I think we should give you a round of applause. Should also acknowledge Carol Laud who has taken on a considerable burden in the last few months in terms of the closing and re-opening. Thank you Carol

Building accessibility work was completed during 2020 and we are now pressing forward with permanent screens if you are wondering what that will look like screen at the back of the main which will be fully retractable. Supplementary screens in front of the Fulthorpe Chapel and in front of the organ on trolleys so they can be moved if necessary. A screen for the music group and the person leading the service in front of the north pillar. That's the proposal.

During the year the CoH bid turned into a reality. The CoH team came into being in the middle of the year, they have overcome many difficulties to maintain and build contact with different members of the community. We are behind where we would have hoped to have been when the bid was put in place but nonetheless things are moving forward. We are continuing to work with asylum seekers. We had a considerable number of funerals but baptisms and weddings almost disappeared.

We welcome Rachel and Seth as part of the ministry at Stranton. Rachel is training for ordination with us. Then there's Lizelke and not forgetting Clive and Michelle. They are all training with Stranton. Perhaps the other thing mentioned in the report, quite a significant decision about Burbank Community Church. The final decision was actually taken by PCC early in January but there was a process in the decision not to re-open Burbank Community Church. It closed with lockdown and hasn't been possible to re-open it because it's in a school, but we felt that was the right decision. We remain committed to working with Ward Jackson School and the people of the Burbank area. Clive remains the Burbank Community Worker but is also continuing with his ordination training. Thank you to Clive and to Angela for remaining in contact with the community linked with Burbank Community Church and encouraging them to come and be part of Stranton We have many people who do all sorts of things in church Thank you to God for what we do but a particular thanks to Angela and Peter our churchwardens for the year

I began my report with a verse from John's Gospel *Remain in Me and I will remain in you* Lets continue to remain in God's love and seek his plans for our church community

At the moment no-one is specifically doing the work that Jean has been doing, although Jo the CoH outreach worker is doing some similar work with those of whom she meets. There are other people in the town who support asylum seekers and Jean always worked with a number of other people not linked with church. Over the five years Jean has been involved the council have also established a system of support where people can access support from the council on a Wednesday. In part that gap has been filled by work the council do. Jean formally retired in 2021. Thank you Jean for the work you have done over the last five years in loving and supporting our neighbours

4. Electoral Roll Revision

The electoral roll is 97. Nine names were removed, two names were added.

Because our membership is now below 100 there are some implications for us with Church Representation Rules. The number of members elected to deanery synod from next year goes down from three to two but we only have two.

Thank you Ken for keeping the electoral roll up to date.

5. Treasurer's Report

Thank you everybody for the amount of support you have given over the year. A lot of churches, a lot of charities have had an exceptionally difficult year with a loss of income. There has been some significant losses of income, through reduced congregations (open collection), no weddings and baptisms (fees and open collection). Thank you for the many who give by on-line giving, bank standing orders and the PGS scheme. I would encourage people to look at the PGS scheme, it gives people the option of giving and gift-aiding anonymously as all donations handled by PGS scheme.

All things being equal we did save some costs because we didn't need to heat and light the church so much, other small cost savings in church but an overall a very mixed year in other respects.

I was asked half way through the year what my feeling for the outturn was. I thought we were heading for a deficit of around £5,000 which would have been fine. Of course we did have the bequest from the late Margaret Lumley's estate. Very fittingly we used some of the bequest to assist in the completion of the new servery area, accessible toilet and handrails etc and because we had £12,000 of her bequest left we actually had a surplus for the year of £9,500 instead of what would have been an underlying deficit of approx £2,500. We have a lot to be thankful to God for.

For Margaret for her life, witness and constant giving of herself, her time, and her talents. Also the generosity shown by many members of this congregation and fellowship.

We didn't furlough our staff during the year as many churches have tended to do, in fact there was specific donations to make sure that didn't happen for which I am very grateful. The rest of it is in the report do ask any questions if you want

God is generous to us as we are generous to others. If you wish to make a donation to Christian Aid you can either do it on-line, we can take card donations today or we have envelopes as well

Clive Rathbone, treasurer of the Methodist Circuit has been our independent examiner for some years.

When he completed the examination of our accounts for the 2020 financial year he said that he is looking to downsize and probably move away so he feels he may not be in a position to continue that so the next item on the agenda can probably be deferred to PCC meeting later in the year.

I'd like to thank a number of people if I could, Maureen, Ken and Sylvia and the counting team and all of you for being part of this church fellowship.

Norman - Thank you David for the report and all the work you do. As we heard from David there's nobody nominated as independent examiner or auditor David proposed that we delegate this to PCC. Andrew Rogers seconds this All in favour

6. Appoint an Independent Examiner or Auditor

Thank you to Clive Rathbone for examining the accounts.

A new independent examiner required for next year. This has been delegated to PCC.

7. Churchwarden's Report (Buildings and Fabric)

Written report included in the Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council. Report taken as written. No questions asked.

Thank you churchwardens.

8. Burbank Community Church, Youth, Children and Families

In 2019 the members of Burbank Community Church would have said that God was saying *keep going, keep going*. It started to change when we went into lockdown, we held a 24 hour prayer event, church meetings, spoke to the leadership team, church members, and churchwardens. We then sensed that God was saying *now is the time to close*. Although Burbank Community Church has closed we continue to pastorally talk to and visit various people from the church.

Obviously Youth and Children's work stopped but hopefully will be allowed to re-start soon. If you do volunteer for any role in church there is a safeguarding process to follow. Volunteers must have DBS clearance and have to attend Diocesan Safeguarding Training. Talk with Clive if you would like to volunteer within church and he will make sure everything is in place to enable you to do this.

CoH are asking for volunteers but they've got their own process in place. If you would like to volunteer with CoH please speak with a member of the team.

Clive is chaplain at Ward Jackson School, he is leading worship and going into school.

Personally, after completing my training, I passed the candidates panel. I met with Bishop Sarah on 10th May and was told the independent reviewer had agreed to put me forward and Bishop Sarah signed me off. This means that I can apply for a post of significant responsibility within the church, vacancies within Durham Diocese will be the first option I discuss with the Archdeacon, Rick Simpson. I just need to wait for the letter formally informing me of this.

We do, as a family, appreciate all the support and prayers you have given over this time.

Michael, a member of Burbank Community Church said thank you very much Clive for all the help you have given me.

Pam Harkness extended her families thanks for everything the church has done pastorally in the past year, which has been a difficult time. Clive and Angela faithfully visited all of us bringing gifts, lovely little snacks and cards. It is very much appreciated in terms of mental health and well-being. Even though Burbank Church doesn't exist on paper the spirit of the church is still here. Thank you very much for the love and care you have given over the years. Well done good and faithful servants
Thank you Michael, thank you Pam, thank you Clive and Angela

9. Election of Members to the PCC (5 vacancies)

Four vacancies for election until 2024 (3 years). David House, Angela Craig and Jacqui Rogers have been nominated. It is possible to nominate someone at this meeting if anyone is interested. No-one else wishes to stand.

David, Angela and Jacqui were duly elected. The meeting was in favour of this. Congratulations to everyone.

There are two vacancies which will remain as a vacancy. Under strict rules nominees need to be on the electoral roll for six months before being elected.

Maybe there are some members of the Burbank Leadership team that might think about filling the vacancies to ensure there is a Burbank perspective brought to PCC. Clive has done that in the past but at some time this year he might move on. It is possible to co-opt people during the year.

10. Other Reports

In the 2020 Report there is a report on Safeguarding, Health and Safety, St Matthew's CC and a number of others including Boys Brigade, Guides and Brownies, Mothers Union etc.

Thank you to everyone who has compiled a report.

No questions were asked, no points were raised.

11. Any Other Business

Pamela Harkness asked when, as a congregation, we could start singing.

Norman replied - The plan, as far as I know, is sometime after 21st June (roadmap 4) seems to be the likely time that restrictions in terms of singing again in church will be lifted. We don't know what the effect of the Indian variant will have at the moment, it could change. It is really difficult running St Matthew's at the moment because you cannot tell people what restrictions will be in place, say in three months' time. You are not alone, I think many would like to return to singing.

The meeting closed with the Grace.