



**Minutes of the meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on  
Monday 11 September 2023 at 8pm at SJs**

**Present:** Jonathan Ward, Rector  
Sally Munns  
Sybil Andrew  
Penny Seabrook  
Sarah Fletcher  
Jeremy Tagg  
Jessica Chick  
Rachel Williams  
Martin Pinnell  
Lenka Ellmann  
Louise Stockdale  
Philippa Tagg  
Marc Bassot  
Julia Cernoch  
Felicity Mason

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Richard Ford, Jackie Barter and Jeff Seabrook.

**2. Prayer**

The meeting opened with a short time of prayer.

**3. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023 and matters arising**

The minutes of the meeting were agreed. The only matter outstanding was that Jon had yet to put together a group to consider reordering of the pews.

**4. Finance**

The Finance Sub-Committee's report had been circulated in advance. We agreed to increase the gift for use of the Parklands Nursery to £600 for the year.

Concerning the Parish Support Fund for 2024, it was agreed that we should reduce our annual Pledge from £87k to £77k. This was to take account of the fact that the appointment of our families' worker was likely to significantly reduce our reserves over the coming years, particularly given that we also had various works that would be required following the Quinquennial Review.

John agreed to write a letter to accompany our Pledge return which Jeremy would submit online by Friday 15 September.

**Action: Jon to write a letter to accompany our 2024 Pledge return, and Jeremy to submit by Friday 15 September.**

## **5. Families' Worker update and Youth Activities**

It was noted that Miranda would be starting work as our new Families' Worker on Tuesday 26 September. Jon planned to send a note to Church members about financing the position. While some had already committed to give to support the post, there would hopefully be many more that would be able to increase their regular giving to help cover the monthly outgoings.

Jeremy and Marc agreed to look into the possibility of seeking funding from external sources through grant applications.

It was noted that Miranda lives outside the Coney Hall/West Wickham area, and would be using SJs as her office. The PCC agreed that it would be helpful if Miranda could supply the PCC with termly reports. It was also considered important that she establish a supportive team around her when she has settled into the role.

Angela had stepped down from DLC.

It was noted that further help would also be needed with 11+ as Jonny and Charlotte would be leaving St John's on 8 October.

**Action: Marc and Jeremy to meet to consider possible grant applications for funding the families' worker post.**

## **6. Use of SJ's**

During the course of 2023, two outside groups had started to use SJs, and a further group planned to do so from September. As matters currently stood, we had not used any formal rental agreements. Sarah, Jeremy and Richard Cienicala had been in touch with each group, requesting various safeguarding, insurance and risk assessment documentation, but as far as finance was concerned, we had left it with them to make a voluntary contribution in the order of £10 a session. The PCC agreed that for now at least we should leave the arrangements as they are, rather than to start any commercial rental arrangements. That said, Jeremy planned to find out how expensive the heating is, so that the voluntary gifts could be increased during the colder months.

## **7. Autumn – Christmas Planning**

To celebrate Harvest, we agreed that we would have a Bring and Share lunch after the service on 1 October. I was agreed that if the weather was likely to be good, we would hold it at the Rectory – otherwise, it would be in the Church.

As far as Halloween was concerned, we agreed to leave that with Miranda to decide what activities might be best.

It was noted that as Christmas Day was on a Monday, it did not seem appropriate to try to hold the usual Sunday services as well as Christingle on Christmas Eve (a Sunday). We therefore agreed the following:

- Sunday 17 December – Carol Service
- Sunday 24 December – two Christingle services and Midnight Communion
- Monday 25 December – 8am and 10am services

**8. Churchwardens' Update**

Felicity explained that we now had a new supplier for WIFI. Also the bell ringers had questioned the access to the bell chamber, as it did not seem particularly safe to use. The Churchwardens would be considering other options to improve the access.

**9. Safeguarding**

Sarah reported that DBS Checks were up-to-date, and that she would be sending a link to PCC members to complete the basic safeguarding course.

She had also raised a question about SJ's keyholders, as it might invalidate our insurance if we did not know exactly who had keys. Richard Cieniala and Jeremy would be putting together a list.

**10. Any other business**

Communion – following a survey of the homegroups, the vast majority wanted to keep things as they were, rather than going back to drinking directly from the common cup.

A question was asked about why the uniform groups had not come back to the Church since Covid. Jon explained he was a trustee of the Group and was still in regular touch with the leaders, who were keen to keep the connection with St John's going. There had not been an appetite from parents and children to resume parade Sunday Services, so the Group were thinking around what a re-imagined connection between the 2 organisations might look like.

**Date of next meeting:** Monday 16 October 2023.

Signed .....

Date: .....