

MINUTES OF GREAT BRICKHILL ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING,
HELD IN THE CHURCH ON THURSDAY 14th APRIL 2011 AT 7.30pm.

The Reverend John Waller took the chair.

He opened the meeting with prayer, and welcomed all those attending.

PART I: THE ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

ELECTION OF THE CHURCH WARDENS:

The Rector explained that with the New Church Wardens' Measure in 2001, the maximum term of office for a Church Warden is 6 years without a break – an exemption is possible for this Rule if a motion is passed before the meeting commences. Mrs. Turner has served 7 years and wished to stand down. Dr. Agambar who has served for 6 years said that she is happy to continue as Warden for one more year. A motion was proposed by Mrs Julia Turner and seconded by Miss Kay Seaman that an exemption be passed in order to allow Dr. Agambar to stand for a further year of office. This was agreed by all present.

The following nomination had been received prior to the Meeting:-

Dr. Christine Agambar proposed by Mrs. Phillipa Cook and seconded by Mrs. Julia Turner.

Dr. Agambar was duly elected.

The Rector expressed his thanks to both the Wardens for all their hard work over the past year, and was pleased to hear that Mrs. Turner wished to continue to be a member of the P.C.C. He looked forward to working with Dr. Agambar in the forthcoming year. He asked all present to think about who might take on the Warden's role in a year's time. The Visitation, when Wardens are sworn in, is being held in Stewkley on Tuesday 17th May at 7.30pm – all are welcome to attend.

PART II: THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

APOLOGIES were received from Mrs. Clare Amies, Mr. Tim Amies, Sir Philip Duncombe, Lady Rachel Duncombe, Miss Anne Humphreys, Mr. David Middleton, Mrs. Janet Pritchard, Mrs. Marion Ralph and Mrs. Pauline Waller. (A total of 9 people).

An Attendance Sheet was circulated. A total of 17 parishioners were in attendance.

MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 22nd APRIL 2010

The Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting had been available in advance. The Minutes were then approved and signed by the Rector as a true record (proposed by Mrs. Val Beardmore-Baldwin and seconded by Mr. David Duncombe).

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

None.

ELECTIONS:

a). Two Deanery Synod Representatives and Nine Members of the P.C.C.

The Rector informed the Meeting that in addition to himself, the Wardens and the Deanery Synod representatives, the number of P.C.C. members allowed for the size of our Electoral Roll is 9. At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2004 provision was made for the annual appointment of representatives on the P.C.C. There is also facility for two people to be co-opted on to the P.C.C. At the first PCC Meeting after the Annual Meeting it has been the custom to co-opt Mr. Neil Cook, the Treasurer.

The Rector explained that the Deanery Synod Representatives (Mrs. Clare Amies and Mr. Jeremy Hopkinson) were elected in 2008 for a period of three years and so their term had come to an end. The Synod Representative's role involves attending four or five evening meetings a year, held at different churches within the Deanery.

The following nominations were received to fill the two positions available:-

<u>Name of Nominee:</u>	<u>Proposed By:</u>	<u>Seconded By:</u>
Clare Amies	Betty Kinsey	Julia Turner
Valerie Beardmore Baldwin	Rosie Dawson	Michael Turner

The Rector said that as Deanery Treasurer, Mr. Jeremy Hopkinson could be co-opted onto the Deanery Synod to carry on fulfilling that role.

All current members of the P.C.C. were willing to continue – the Rector thanked them for their help during the last year and was pleased that they were willing to serve again. Nominations for the P.C.C. had been received prior to the meeting for the following:

<u>Name of Nominee:</u>	<u>Proposed By:</u>	<u>Seconded By:</u>
Simon Bennett	Betty Kinsey	Marion Ralph
Phillipa Cook	Christine Agambar	Julia Turner
Rosie Dawson	Phillipa Cook	Julia Turner
David Duncombe	Julia Turner	Betty Kinsey
Julia Turner	Christine Agambar	Phillipa Cook

The above five people were duly elected to serve on the PCC. The Rector welcomed Mr. Simon Bennett to the P.C.C.

b). Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2011.

The Treasurer said that Mr. David Beatty had acted as Independent Examiner for the current year as was willing to continue. Proposed by Mr. Alan Poynter and seconded by Dr. Christine Agambar, Mr. Beatty was duly appointed as Independent Examiner for 2011.

c). Sidesmen.

The Rector gave the names of those who currently serve as Sidesmen. No other names were put forward and so, following a proposal by Mrs. Rosie Dawson, seconded by Mrs. Julia Turner, all the Sidesmen on the current list were elected for the forthcoming year.

REPORTS:

Detailed reports had been prepared and included in the written Annual Report and Accounts for the year to December 2010. Key points from those reports and updates from the start of 2011 were presented to the Meeting.

(a). Wardens including Fabric.

Mrs. Julia Turner presented the report on behalf of the Wardens.

Appendix: I.

(b). Treasurer Including Adoption of Accounts.

Copies of the Annual Report had been distributed in advance of the Meeting. The Treasurer, Mr. Neil Cook, presented the Accounts and referred to the "Review of the Accounts" section in the Annual Report.

The Treasurer explained that as the income of the Church is under £100K there is an exemption from having to register separately with the Charities Commission. This ruling may change in due course.

He added that the daily running costs of the Church remains in the region of £99 per day, excluding any major restoration costs. The total of disbursements to all charitable causes during the year was in excess of £5,000. This represents approximately 16% of the Income Received (excluding Assignables) for the year.

The Rector referred to the section in the Report dealing with the Parish Share. He said that the decision not to pay the whole of the Parish Share was not taken lightly. A working group has been set up to address the matter and will report to the P.C.C. at their next meeting.

The Treasurer thanked Mr. David Beatty for his role of Independent Examiner of the Accounts. Adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts was proposed by Mr. Alan Poynter and seconded by Miss Kay Seaman. The report was unanimously accepted.

The Treasurer reported that since the start of the year the VAT refund of £26,269 due for the St Mary's restoration work had been received.

The Rector thanked the Treasurer for his hard work on the accounts throughout the year.

(c). Deanery Synod.

Mr. Jeremy Hopkinson referred to the Deanery Synod section in the Annual Report. He added that an appointment has now been made for Stewkley, which was good to hear as it had been a difficult vacancy to fill. There is now a full complement of clergy in the Deanery.

The Rector said that he was no longer Area Dean, the end of his five year term had finished on 31st March. Reverend Laurence Meering who had been Acting Area Dean for a while, had taken over the role.

(d). Electoral Roll.

Mr. Jeremy Hopkinson referred to the Electoral Roll section in the Annual Report. The current number on the Electoral Roll is 54.

(e). High Ash School.

Dr. Christine Agambar had written the item for the Annual Report. She added that she was pleased that Mrs. Joy Wilson was replacing her as Foundation Governor, having completed five years in the role. Mrs. Wilson had been a serving Community Governor and would now be a Foundation Governor along with Reverend John Waller and Mr. Butch Baker.

Dr. Agambar reported that the school is always in some sort of crisis, currently due to being located on the county boundary, with reluctance from Milton Keynes to pay for each child who comes to

school here. 40 of the total of 240 pupils live in Great Brickhill. The school is active in Christian fellowship and has a very supportive Head Teacher. It is an extremely successful school.

The Rector said that he was pleased that Mrs. Wilson is taking over as Foundation Governor. He thanked Dr. Agambar for all her work with the school and also gave thanks to Mr. Baker for all his input particularly with singing and music.

(f). St. Mary's 2000.

Mrs. Rosie Dawson had prepared the item included in the Annual Report. She had nothing to add except to say that reaching the end of this stage of the project was a milestone, with thanks to all who made it possible.

(g). Bells.

Mr. David Middleton was unable to attend the Meeting but had passed on the following points to Mrs. Phillipa Cook to present to the meeting:-

As an update to the section in the Annual Report referring to the bells and bell project, Mr. Middleton reported that the project was essentially finished except for the carpet and sound insulation in the ringing room. Mr. Middleton wished to thank the congregation for their support in raising the money and for their patience during the work, and also the Parish Council for their generous donation. He also wished to personally thank the P.C.C. for getting the project to fruition.

With regard to ringing, there are weekly practices and ringing before all services. There has been interest from visiting ringers who are complimentary about the bells. Mr. Middleton is using help from outside ringers to develop the band. New ringers would be welcome.

The Rector added that while he had been at home on Sundays during his sabbatical it was lovely to hear the bells being rung. Dr. Agambar said that there had not yet been either a quarter or full peel of bells.

(h). Music and Choir.

In addition to the "Music and Choir" section given in the Annual Report, Mr. Robin Dawson presented the following report:-

Thanks largely to Jerry Breslin and also to the cooperation of Bow Brickhill we have a choir. In recent months choir practices have moved from Bow Brickhill to Great and the majority of Bow choir now practice with us and increasingly join in with our services. As a result we are moving closer to having a benefice choir rather than separate village choirs.

We have some new members and are working on others to join us. This is relatively easy for new girls who sing soprano as they are likely to know some of the tunes anyway. It is rather more difficult for other parts coming into four part singing as they have to forget the tune they know and learn part singing from scratch. This learning process is helped by "standing next to Nellie". Unfortunately Nellies are a bit thin on the ground and do not always come to choir practice.

Surprisingly what seems to help is our big concerts such as Handel's Messiah. Some of our community come along to these practices "for the journey" with no intention of participating. At some point along the road they find that they might just get up sufficient speed with the music to the point where they can take part in the concert. The broad grins of exhilaration on the faces of those who have completed the journey are a joy to behold. Paul Dickens is of enormous help with these concerts and other occasions such as Nine Lessons & Carols as well as weddings. Many thanks to Paul.

In the meantime we are in transition. Jerry does a huge amount but he also has obligations to other churches. The relationship with Bow is very informal and our choir does not have a musician leader.

The Rector gave his gratitude to all the choir members, particularly to Jerry Breslin, and to all the musicians.

(i). Youth Café.

The Rector added to the item in the Annual Report by saying that the Youth Café is not a church run project but members of the church are involved. It is an informal drop-in held at High Ash, noisy and lively. It is resourced partly by Youth for Christ in Aylesbury and funded by the Parish Council. How the Youth Café is funded in the future has yet to be resolved. Before Christmas a worship event was held in the church.

The Rector confirmed that the children come from in and around the village and are largely ex pupils of High Ash. There is a pool of 40-50 children with up to 30 or more attending each session. There is an optional element to talk about moral issues; these sessions have become more clearly bible focused, a choice made by the children

(j). Drop-In, Thursday Group and Romanian Shoe Box Appeal etc.

A report on these various activities is included in the Annual Report. Mrs. Betty Kinsey gave an update for January to April:-

The fortnightly Wednesday midweek Communion and Bible Study sessions and Thursday Group meetings resumed after the Christmas break until the start of Lent. They will both start up again in May.

As in previous years for five weeks in Lent a simple Lunch has been held on a Thursday, followed by a Lent Discussion Group. The theme this year has been “At the Table” – five themes drawn from Bible passages about people sharing meals together. Thank you to the Rector for preparing the course and leading the sessions and to all those who hosted the Lunch/discussion groups. Donations were collected at the Lunches and the money will be sent to a chosen charity.

Thanks also go to those who host the Thursday Group meetings and arrange the speakers and outings. Thank you also to those who help out at the Monday Drop In. Money donated at the free Drop in sessions had been use to purchase a new vacuum cleaner and candles.

The Rector said that he appreciated what he gets out of the Bible Sessions and Lent discussion groups. All of these various activities are modest but form an important part in the life of the church.

(k). The Benefice Website.

Phillipa Cook had provided an item for the Annual Report on the first full year of the website. She reported that the use of the website continues to increase with 9726 “hits” in January this year, with 896 in one day. The one disappointing feature is that there is very little input by anybody else – any items or reports can easily be uploaded. There is particularly poor support from the other three churches in the Benefice.

(l). The Rector.

The Rector gave the following report:-

From a Benefice point of view, there are meetings to plan and resource Family Services – there was a successful service in January. There is the need to make better use of e-mail and to include High Ash. The rector is continuing to look at Family Services across the benefice.

There has been discussion with regard to a change in the Service Pattern, to even out the balance of services across the Benefice. Concerns and questions have been raised but it may be that a new pattern of services will be agreed by the Wardens and then put to the P.C.C.s.

The Rector recorded personal thanks for all who enabled him to have the sabbatical in the summer – a time for rest, a break, family time and retreat. Thanks especially to those who put themselves out to help and lead the services.

The Rector gave thanks for everyone’s understanding and support for Pauline - the funding of the car, the visits and general support, none of which is taken for granted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

The difficulty in paying the Parish Share was discussed and Mrs. Rosie Dawson said that the sub-committee for the P.C.C. had met this morning to talk about fundraising to reconcile the deficit.

The Reverend John Waller thanked everyone for attending and the meeting concluded with Compline (a short said service of evening prayer) at 8.30pm.

Church of St. Mary-the-Virgin, Great Brickhill

Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Thursday 14th April 2011

APPENDIX I: Wardens' Report

Christine and I would like to thank John and the PCC for their continued support and hard work throughout the year, and all those who regularly lead the worship here in our church; also those who took services during John's sabbatical. We would particularly like to mention Marion Ridgeway, and thank her for her part in organising clergy, amongst other things, whilst John was away.

We very much appreciate the commitment given by the readers and servers, the choir and the organists; those who keep the church polished and clean, and the churchyard mown; the ladies who arrange the flowers each week and on special occasions and to all those who give their time to the running of the church.

I would particularly like to thank Steve Agambar for his help and advice with the heating and water pipes. We are most grateful to the contribution to the costs of repairing the leaks from the Brickhill Charity. All seems to be working well now and we are extremely glad to report that Steve's inspection of the pipes under the chancel showed the area to be dry, with no signs of rust erosion. Unfortunately the same cannot be said of some of the stonework on the outside of the church, particularly on the west wall where the harsh winter has taken its toll on the ancient masonry.

Surely one of the high spots of the year must be the service for the Dedication of the Bells. It was wonderful that so many people were able to be with us on that day, many of whom had played some part in getting the old bells repaired, retuned and rehung along with two new bells. The service was a joyous occasion, attended by Bishop Alan, followed by tea and delicious homemade cakes served here in the church. Since then the bellringers have produced a wonderful sound on many occasions and we are grateful to the Tower Captain, David Middleton and his team for turning out regularly to ring for our services.

The weekly pew sheet, produced thanks to Christine, continues to provide a useful guide to the week and forthcoming events. We are grateful to Jerry Breslin for the varied charity concerts held here in the church.

The Snowdrop Walk and Plant Fayre were again very successful and enjoyable. Our sincere thanks to Sally and David Duncombe, and Pat and Martin Thomas and Christine and Steve Agambar respectively, for all their hard work organising these events. One other source of revenue for the church is the collection of newspaper and cardboard for recycling, and we must thank Frank and Betty Kinsey for organising this. Your support for these and other fund raising events is much appreciated, especially as we are facing challenges in the near future to meet our Parish Share and to keep the church warm and welcoming, as well as giving to those whose need is greater than ours.

Our services on the whole are fairly well attended, with good congregations at Christmas and Easter. Last year saw a rise in the number of Baptisms with a total of nine, and one earlier this year. A new Baptism Role was purchased, along with a new vacuum cleaner thanks to money given by the 'Drop-in', who are also sponsoring this year the purchase of the church candles.

It is with some regret that I give up the duties of Churchwarden. The support and friendship I have been given over the last seven years has been immense. The peace and quiet of this wonderful church has been of great solace and comfort to me. And so it is with no hesitation that I would still like to be involved and help Christine in any way I can.

Julia Turner