

WEAVERHAM PAROCHIAL & ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
Annual Meeting held on 25th April 2016

The meeting opened with The Order of Evening Prayer taken from the book of Common Worship, led by Rev Andrew Brown (Chairman). The Bible Readings were from Psalm 61, Acts 2 verses 40 to 43 (The early church) and Matthew 6 verse 5 (from the Sermon on the Mount). The worship continued with Prayer followed by us all saying the Lord's Prayer.

Meeting for the Election of Churchwardens held on 25th April 2016 in the Lighthouse

Two nominations were received in respect of Louise Parry and Ted Smith. Louise Parry and Ted Smith were duly elected, and thanked for continuing in the role.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 25th April 2016 in the Lighthouse

Election of Parochial Church Council members – there had been 4 nominations, Jean Bracegirdle, Chris Hornby, Robert Owens and Colin Weeks. All were duly elected. The Chairman thanked the retiring members and prayed for those elected. The Chairman then invited anyone from the congregation to fill a further place on the PCC recently vacated by the resignation of Dr. Kenneth Baird.

Appointment of Sidesmen and Sideswomen

There were no new appointments of Sidespersons at this time, all current sidesmen and sideswomen were re-elected. The Chairman thanked all those re-elected for their work in the past year. John Freeman expressed his concern that churchwardens and sidespersons were not fully completing their duties. Guidelines for sidespersons duties will be circulated. (TS)

Annual Ecumenical Church Council Meeting held on Monday 28th April 2016 in the Lighthouse

Present: Revd Andrew Brown and 27 parishioners. Apologies were received from 3 members of the ECC and 1 member of the congregation.

The minutes of the previous Annual Meeting held on 27th April 2015 were approved and signed.

Electoral Roll Report

Peter Wilkinson presented the report on the Electoral Roll, which was the third revision of the 2013 roll. In 2015 there were three removals from the roll and no new enrolments with no pending enrolments and 1 pending removal that of the sad death of Ron Crouchley. There are now 147 members, a decrease of 2%. The roll consists of 44 men and 103 women, 122 live within the parish and 25 outside. This follows previous patterns. We now have a duality of Anglican and Methodist members, members can be either or both. The Numbers are 142 Anglican and 18 Methodist (of whom 13 are joint members). There are still a significant number of regular worshippers who are not on the roll; forms are always available at the back of church. The report was accepted, and thanks extended to Peter.

Annual Report of the ECC and the Financial Statement

The Annual Report and Financial Statement have been posted for the past two weeks on the church Notice Board. The accounts have been satisfactorily examined by the Independent Examiner. Financially the money coming in has covered that going out. Fund raising for the Lighthouse Annexe project, by way of grants and other means continues. The report and accounts were accepted and thanks were expressed to John Freeman for all his work.

Stephen Wilson questioned the difference in tax recovered in the year 2015 compared to 2014. John Freeman explained that this was due to gift aid being 6 months in arrears and also gift aid attributed to donations received from the congregation towards Lighthouse Annexe project. Stephen Wilson also questioned the large jump in our donations to other charities, £8,500 in 2015 compared to £4,500 in 2014. John Freeman explained that this was due to two payments to charities agreed in 2014 being carried over into 2015.

Appointment of Honorary Independent Examiner

Mr Kevin Pickering was reappointed as Honorary Independent Examiner, with thanks given for his work so far.

2015-2016 St Mary's Groups & Events Presentation

A pictorial presentation of church groups and events held this past year was shown. The Chairman commented on the surprising number of activities that we as a church are involved with. The presentation was well received and finished with prayers.

Chairman's Remarks

A moments silence was held for Ron Crouchley a past Churchwarden and lifelong member of the congregation.

The Chairman gave thanks for the events and activities that happened over the past year. The amount of energy and effort that many people have put into the life of our Church fellowship is quite amazing. We praise God for His faithfulness in rising up workers for what's going on. Thanks to Carol and Anne for their work as MU leaders over the past 5 years and thanks for Margaret and Linda taking on the new role as leaders. Thanks to Dave Whitfield and his team of slavers who have worked so hard in preparing this building and making a safer exit around the back. Also thanks to Mike and the team raising funds and filling in the tiresome forms and dealing with that side of the project. Thanks to Ted and Louise for their hard work in their responsibilities as Churchwardens and for Ted also as secretary. There are many, many other people who do big or little jobs in the church, all of them are important and thanks to them for what they are doing to the glory of God.

A few highlights of the year

- Message Trust in Manchester came to Weaverham High School and took an RE lesson for each year group. It was a great opportunity to share their faith and out of the schools in the local area, the High School had over 50 children go to the Rally at the Apollo held over 5 nights. 2,000 children and young people made some commitment to Jesus over those nights and 25 of them came from Weaverham and are being followed up.
- Lighthouse kids the new after school children's group. This has been great fun to interact with the little ones and try to get a bit of the message over each week. We regularly get 20-25 children; in fact we put a limit of 25.
- Since Last Autumn we have also gone to monthly events for Chaos Saturday Messy Church. I know this has been hard work, but we are starting to see the fruits of this and many folk who have no other contact with the church are coming back month after month.
- The Korean prayer mission visit to Weaverham was an uplifting event where the group toured our village stopping to pray at schools churches and places where the community meets. Thanks go to Lindsay and Bob for preparing food for the group.

So we are called to a task.

There are other challenges too; our Sunday congregations are sliding in number as well. And none of us are getting younger and there are not so many people coming in at the younger end. Chaos and other activities are aimed at addressing this, but maybe we have to do other things as well.

The Christianity Explored courses will try to address this as it challenges folk about their faith and to make a step of commitment to the Lord.

All the passages we've had read speak about prayer, whether that's individual prayer, or corporate prayer or in song or whatever. It is coming close to God and we need to do that.

The Chairman read out a recent letter received from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby and the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu. The letter invites us all to join in a week of prayer, between the 8th and 15th May, to evangelize our country in a hope for all of us to deepen our faith in Jesus.

As a church we have our regular prayers every Sunday, also we encourage people to draw close to God. We have a prayer ministry team at the Sunday 10.30 service. We have home groups where people can be safe and be prayed for together. We have a prayer meeting twice a month to pray for the Church, even though there might be 4-5 of us we lift up the church in prayer and praise. It would be wonderful if more came along to it.

Psalm 61 speaks of going to the one higher than us and dwelling in His presence. Acts 2 speaks of the early church being a true community of faith, coming under the teaching of the disciples, supporting each other and being faithful in prayer. Jesus speaks the Lord's Prayer as a way of drawing close to our heavenly Father, in community prayer and personal prayer. Prayer is so important – response to the mission and the prayer ministry that went on behind the scenes.

Although we have to get things done, have project teams, have committees and the like, what we are doing is not just practical action, even slapping the mortar around next door. It's all Spiritual and to the glory of God. That's what our Lent course underlined so much that our character, work and life, should demonstrate our faith.

The Archbishops are calling us to pray for the evangelisation of the nation – meaning we take the evangel – the Good News of Jesus to all the country. Not just to set up a group, but to come to God in prayer and cry out to Him.

The Chairman then went on to say: "I believe we need to heed this call to prayer by the Archbishops, when the church prays, things happen. So in that week of prayer we will be having church open every evening and also a call to set aside a time every day to get close to God, for those who are not able to get out. This is a start for what I hope for us is a time to become a people more of prayer, of that Godly virtue being a part of our character, of truly dwelling in the Lord's presence, wherever we are.

From that we don't know how God will move, but I want Him to move and be a part of that here in Weaverham. We have a good foundation, but we need the Lord to be building in this place as well as the brick layers next door. Let's humble ourselves before the Lord and ask Him to come and move in our village as He already is."

Terrier and Log Book.

Louise Parry has still one item to sort out but informs the meeting that this year all of the kneelers have been counted. The Terrier Log Book will be signed at the next ECC meeting.

Dates

The next ECC Meeting will be on Monday 23rd May 2016 at 7.30pm.

The Archdeacon visitation will be at All Saints Church, Thelwall at 7.30pm on 18th May 2016, all sidespeople and PCC members are encouraged to attend.

Christian Aid week will be on the 15th to 22nd May. Volunteers are required to deliver envelopes.

The meeting closed with prayer.