

PARISH OF BRINSLEY WITH UNDERWOOD

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

Sunday 11th October 2020

In St Michael and All Angels Church, Underwood

The Rev David Stevenson was in the chair and opened the meeting with prayer.

There were 18 persons present in church and online by Zoom. Peter and Jane Fletcher, Yvonne Derbyshire, Dawn Justice, Andrew Palmer, Paul and Rachel Lake, David and Karen Hammond, Helen Baker, Mary Simpson Eyre, Christine Smith, Hazel Heath, Andy Tadley and Rev. David Stevenson. Online by Zoom Bob Tyers, Nicky Smith and Tracy Palmer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Andy Fell, Penny Fell, John and Liz Roworth, Sarah Harker and Gayna Hall.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING FOR THE ELECTION OF CHURCH WARDENS 2019

Peter Fletcher proposed, and Mary Simpson-Eyre seconded that the minutes of the last meeting held on 7th April 2019 be accepted as a true record. 12 were in favour and there were 6 abstentions.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS

Nominations were received as follows:

St James the Great, Brinsley

Peter Fletcher Proposed by Christine Smith, seconded by Rachel Lake

Christine Smith Proposed by Jane Fletcher, seconded by Mary Simpson-Eyre

St Michael and All Angels, Underwood

Mary Simpson-Eyre Proposed by Yvonne Derbyshire, seconded by Hazel Heath

Gayna Hall Proposed by Mary Simpson-Eyre, Rachel Lake

Rev David declared all duly elected and thanked everyone for their willingness to stand and for all the hard work they put into the churches.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 2019

Rachel Lake proposed, and Jane Fletcher seconded that the minutes of the last meeting held on 7th April 2019 be accepted as a true record. 12 were in favour and there were 6 abstentions.

2. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3. PROCEEDINGS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) 2019-2020

The PCC held 8 meetings since the previous APCM, the last three meetings were held online, either by Zoom or teams. The PCC also received and discussed reports from the church wardens and treasurer at each meeting, and from the deanery synod representatives.

Items of business has been dominated by One Life Mission and the visit of the Archbishop of York John Sentamu and his team to Nottinghamshire, Coronavirus, the lockdowns, financial impact and not being able to worship in church or partake in Holy communion.

Reports recorded of the re-ordering progress at St Michael's.

Andrew Palmer, PCC secretary

The following reports have been reviewed and discussed at the meeting.

4. CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT FOR ST JAMES THE GREAT, BRINSLEY

Up until the Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020, St James continued to benefit from regular community use for a wide variety of events including parties, line dancing, musical theatre workshops, as well as the weekly Brinsley Community Choir, Community Café and the 1st St James Brownie Group.

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the St James Weekend had to be spread over 2 weekends, with the Annual Coffin Walk taking place on Saturday 20 July and the Celebration Service on Sunday 28 July, with Revd Francis Wainaina as guest speaker, followed by a 'bring and share' lunch.

The oneLIFE Mission, 12-15 September 2019, led to a number of encouraging outreach events, including the Showtime 2019 at the Underwood 'Stute. The weekend had been preceded by a weekly prayer session in St James on Wednesdays at 8.00am.

The November Remembrance Sunday Service was very well attended with around 100 people, including Parish Councillors, representatives from various Brinsley Groups, the Royal British Legion, a bugler and a good number of young people.

Brinsley School held 3 nativity rehearsals in St James with 2 performances on the 4 and 10 December.

Sunday 22 December saw the 'Carols at St James' also extremely well attended by 111 people, including items by Sarah Harker and a small group from Singsation.

One disappointment was the very low number (27) attending the Christmas Eve Midnight Communion.

Successes, items for praise

- The increased numbers attending Remembrance Sunday and Carols at St James.
- The continued community use (pre-covid-19).
- The closer connection with Brinsley Primary School.
- The large numbers attending the Community Café.
- The additional kitchen wall tiling and s/s splashback provided by the Community Café.
- Vaughan Price for continuing to cut the new churchyard grass.

Items for prayer

- The end of covid-19 and return to a new normality.
- The return of community groups.
- Volunteers to join a rota for refreshments after services.
- Volunteers to join a basic cleaning rota (dusting, vacuuming).
- Volunteers to join a church flowers rota.
- Volunteers to help with basic tidying of the churchyard, including cutting the front hedge.

5. CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT FOR ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, UNDERWOOD

All the usual annual servicing took place ie the boilers organ and alarm. Wood worm was found to be present in the organ and Jonathan was to contact us about it. The choir continue to use our church as a venue to practice in. Starting with Annual garden Party this was well attended as usual. The sponsored ride and stride this year took place on 13th September but this year is was poorly attended David Hammond cycled for us and Mary and Gayna walked it Carol Brett went in her car. This coincided with Arch Bishop Sentamu and the other Northern Bishops and their teams of helper coming into our deanery. Several of us from the parish went to Newstead Village hall to hear the Archbishops talk. This year the walk to Southwell took Place at St Michaels weekend. We had good weather, managing to be in various pubs when it rained, so we arrived dry and in very good time at Southwell, and had a really lovely blessing in the Pilgrims Chapel, conducted by Dean Nicola. We held our Harvest service on the allotments which had rather a sparse attendance, the weather not being kind to us. We held the Childrens light party again on October 31st, which was great fun for all helpers and participants. We held the All Souls service at St Michaels, which was well attended, Davids very thoughtful talk was well received, November Remembrance service this was the first time that we had tried a service at Both St James and St Michaels .It was due to be held at St James but a request was made that we held a service at St Michaels and thanks to the area dean we were able to oblige and it was well attended. We welcomed Underwood school for their usual Christmas productions and their Christingle also Bagthorpe for their annual Christmas service. For whatever the reason our usual Christmas services were down in number. The Huthwaite Prize Band played for our carol service but without Haydn Cooper who was to ill to attend and who later died. Underwood School used the Church on January 6th for their workshop , Spirituality in schools. Paul and Rachel attended in their role as governors, and Mary and Gayna were also invited in their role as churchwardens.

Gayna invited Underwood School and Bagthorpe School to a ‘time travelling’ type day called Experience Easter, hosting 56 children from Underwood and 64 from Bagthorpe. However, this was cancelled due to the onset of the Coronavirus. Gayna mounted the text and illustrations in the Lyche Gate Porch over at the start of Holy Week, so people will be able to see and read the Easter Story even if they cannot enter the church. Unfortunately, we have experienced some vandalism. Someone chose to take their anger out against a window. Procedures are in place for its repair but because of the current coronavirus we are unable to proceed as everyone is in lockdown including window repair staff. We had a quinquennial inspection done on the church but because of the current situation no work can be carried out. We are still raising funds for our reordering work and are still trying to secure grants to help us but again because of the current situation everything is on hold. The faculty is progressing for the New notice boards. We are going to have a notice on the Lych gate stating that we have war graves in our churchyard. The Grass has always been cut by Ashfield District Council sadly this isn't the case anymore we have been put under Selston and district council it is doubtful whether it will be cut as often. Mary and Gayna did a quick Churchyard tidy for Mother's day.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

Receipts of unrestricted funds totalled £61,000, including Gift Aid of £4500. Gift Aid had not been claimed for 2018 so we are grateful to our new Giving Secretary for getting records and claims up to date. The house on Main Road continued to be let and provided a gross income of £6300. Our share of diocesan fees amounted to over £12000. Magazine advertising and printing services brought in £1900. Fundraising events' income was much lower than last year, but this was somewhat balanced out by more being given towards the refurbishment of St Michael's. £582 was received from the Historic Churches Trust following the Ride and Stride event. Use of both churches by a variety of commercial and voluntary groups brings in around £7000. The bulk of this is from the hire of St James following its refurbishment. We also receive a significant £3200 from the successful cafes run in both churches. We also collected almost £1000 for charities: Tools with a Mission, Royal British Legion and Framework. Restricted donations totalled £32,000 for St Michael's re-ordering including a legacy of £27,300, receipts at events and generous donations in remembrance of parishioners. £1040 was donated to the clock fund and small amounts totalling £50 were still being given specifically for St James' refurbishment. Payments from unrestricted funds amounted to £58,000. We met our Parish Share of £29,000 which was a 2% increase on the year before. We did benefit from a discount given to those who pay by direct debit and we have arranged to pay as many of our service providers as possible by direct debit to gain discounts and cut down on administration time. We also joined the Parish Buying scheme's energy basket. It took a year to get all the energy contracts changed over but we should see the benefit of the scheme's negotiating power and again it saves a lot of admin time as there were four separate contracts which had to be re-negotiated each year. Energy costs this year were down by £900. We had a very light year as regards maintenance as most costs were routine ones. Around £1000 was spent on the clock from the restricted fund. The net result for the year was an excess of receipts over payments of £3000 on unrestricted funds. The balance carried forward at the end of the year totalled £30,000 of unrestricted funds.

Reserves Policy

It is PCC policy to try to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds which equates to at least three months' unrestricted payments. This is equivalent to £16,000. This is held to meet emergencies and smooth out fluctuations in cash flow. This cash balance was maintained throughout 2019. The balance of £140,000 in the high interest account is retained towards the cost of St Michael's refurbishment, £1700 is restricted in the clock fund and £3700 towards St James' final refurbishment projects.

Helen Baker, treasurer

7. ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

The roll has been compiled and now stands at 65 people, a reduction of 1, from the previous roll and three new applications received at the meeting.

Andrew Palmer, secretary

8. WEDNESDAY NIGHT HOME GROUP REPORT

The Wednesday Night Home Group continues to be hosted by Nicky Smith and maintains a nucleus of 9 people, one of whom are from another church, which adds an interesting dimension to our discussions. We have used a diverse set of Bible Studies and although we aim to stick to the guidelines of the studies, we do often find ourselves digressing down a variety of avenues, depending on what is happening in member's/friends and family's lives at the time. It is amazing how God speaks to us through these precious times. As

always, I would strongly recommend anyone not currently in a Home Group to consider joining one, or even starting a new one. It is a great help in understanding and growing in faith together in a non-threatening environment. Thank you to Nicky for her continued wonderful and generous hospitality!

Peter Fletcher

9. THURSDAY NIGHT POST-ALPHA HOME GROUP REPORT

Until covid-19, we continued to hold a post-Alpha Home Group at our home with 6 - 8 people regularly attending. We ran the Start Course with this group as well as other Bible Studies. The real, pleasing development of this group is the way people have grown in confidence in expressing themselves and praying within the group.

Peter Fletcher

10. LIVING WITH LOSS REPORT

Living with Loss is a fellowship group for anyone who has suffered any form of loss in their life. This group meets in the meeting room in St James Church, Brinsley, on the first Thursday in every month from 2.00 until 4.00pm and enjoys participating in a variety of different 'crafts' whilst enjoying a 'cuppa' and a 'chat'. We are normally a group of between 12-18 people each month. Both ladies and gents are most welcome to come along, although currently we do only have one gentleman regularly attending.

Many positive comments have been received from those taking part:-

- "I love coming to Living with Loss and am always disappointed when I can't make it for some reason".
- "I am joining in with crafts and having a go at things I thought I would never try or couldn't do and have been pleasantly surprised by the results. We all encourage each other to 'have a go'."
- "Living alone following a bereavement can be so lonely and I look forward to Living with Loss as everyone is so friendly, caring and encouraging".
- "It is so good to be able to be 'yourself' in your own grief without anyone judging you".

Thank you to Nicky Smith who, after taking up the voluntary role of craft co-ordinator, continues to re-source new ideas for us and brings along all the necessary resources for each participant to carry out the chosen craft activity. We are so lucky to be able to share her time and talents every month.

The group are selfsupporting and any donations given towards the cost of providing materials are normally kindly handed back by Nicky towards buying Church flowers for Brinsley and Underwood.

Jane Fletcher

Co-coordinator for Living with Loss

11. ALPHA REPORT

in this Parish we have been running the Alpha Course in a variety of different venues for over 10 years and this course has been well attended by people from both our churches and other churches.

However, in 2019, following the oneLIFE 12-15 September 2019 Mission led by the Archbishop of York we were encouraged to participate in the START Course. So, instead of running an Alpha Course, Peter and Jane Fletcher led the START Course in their home on Plainspot Road, Brinsley and anyone was welcome to attend. The course started on 17th October 2019 at 7.30pm with 8 participants. As with any other newly introduced courses it is always interesting to receive feedback. Positives about the course include:

- Short course with each session being about one hour only
- Easy to commit to as it is only six sessions
- Easy to understand with a mixture of easy listening video clips, no pressured discussion and time for reflection.
- An enjoyable opportunity to explore and share the Christian Faith in the comfort of a home

Items for prayer this year include:

- To have the wisdom to know whether to run Alpha or START again this year or any other basics course
- To find the right venue and helpers for whatever course is run
- How and who to invite to future courses

Jane Fletcher – Alpha Co-coordinator in the Parish of Brinsley with Underwood

12. The Pie men

There are 16 of us on the email list and despite several illnesses during the year 14 have appeared at least once. Four of our members are from other churches or none and 3 live outside our parish

Our most frequent event is the PieNight on a Thursday at the Miners Welfare where for about 2 hours we have open and free discussion on all matters, spiritual, political and sporting.

Once a month we take over the lounge at the Durham Ox Brinsley where we cook and serve supper to around 10 Piemen and often 4 locals. This is also where we raise our funds from which this year, we have made donations to good causes totalling £235

We have held 2 open-to-all evenings at the Ox, probably the largest and noisiest being when the Bishop of Durham visited us at the Durham Ox.

Once a month on a Saturday morning 7 of us meet at Morrisons in Eastwood for our Codelife (New Kind of Man) Breakfast where good food is mixed with good teaching and letting our light shine in the community. We have provided manpower at several church and community activities, building things and burning things.

A growing number of us have also joined in with local and national men's ministry events including Bishop Tony's Man Alive breakfasts, enjoying powerful worship and testimonies.

13. The Community Café at St James

The café, which started 5 years ago as a Lent sacrificial project, continues to grow with a community now of around 100 which includes occasional visitors from America, Australia, Holland, Nuneaton, Selston, Arnold and Newthorpe.

The atmosphere is always warm, welcoming and several customers use the phrase spirit filled.

The year was not without its difficulties, starting with the loss of the main cake baker's oven followed by staff turnover and more recently John the 'griddleman's' illness. The café community rallied, and several new volunteers have joined the team to steady the ship. This has however meant less opportunity to be on the floor sharing the good news. We are happy however to see people continuing to find their way via the café into broader church life.

A side effect of a growing participation and despite deliberately low prices has been the generation of surplus funds. The team took the decision that after making correct physical and financial contributions to the church of £2400, the funds should be offered initially to other community activities in our area. To this end 17 groups have benefitted across all ages of the community along with several animal welfare charities to an amount of £2600.

We have now introduced periodic Generosity Days where the tills are closed, and donations accepted in favour of The Month's Chosen Charity. The recipients so far have been, Spring's Day Care, Friends of Brinsley Headstocks, The Salvation Army who led our Christmas celebrations and The Christmas Toy Appeal. Our thanks go to Peter Fletcher who helps us by setting out the tables and Christine Smith who is there at the end to help the weary tidy up.

14. The Blessings Course and Local Houses of Prayer

In the autumn we ran the first series of courses for 16 attendees from BwithU, Westwood and Eastwood. The course itself was interesting, challenging and inspiring. This was followed by an introduction

to Local Houses of Prayer and expect to establish the first 4 or 5 L Hops soon. We have just started a second series with 30 in attendance. We may yet see the promised powerful movement of God in 2020
Bob Tyers

BwithU Church and Community Magazine Report

The magazine has had a traumatic year in 2019. At the start of the year Andy Fell was carrying all the pressure of Editing and Publishing. Bob Tyers was organising Production, Distribution and Delivery along with Advertising. The situation was untenable. Nicky Smith joined in to Take on the Centre Page diary until a suitable permanent Diarist could be found and we are happy to say that Anne Steel has now picked up that roll. It soon became apparent that the Editorial/Production team needed to be strengthened and we were blessed by Helen Broomfield joining us as Editor along with Lyn Dejewski as a proof-reader allowing Andy to concentrate on artwork and design. There have been some changes in the delivery team, and we thank all those who are continuing and those who have found it necessary to 'retire'. The production group is working well but we do need at least holiday cover for production organisation and bulk distribution.

15. YOUTH OUTREACH REPORT

Items of Praise

- **Archbishop's Visit & Barbeque on the Park**
- **Educational/Activity Session at the Mill Activity Centre**
- **Grants from both Selston Parish Council and Community Café**

When the Archbishop of York visited at the end of the Summer, he brought along a Christian Youth Worker. She wanted to see our Outreach Project in action and then offer us some advice. At the end of the session she said:

"Wow! You have what I have always wanted. A park full of young people, who not only accept your presence in their space but who actively seek to engage with you. They all know you, like you and respect you. They were desperate to see if you could walk on water too!" (I did - but I cheated!)

We have worked hard over these past eight years building relations with the **Local Council, Police** and **Community Support Officers**. Last Summer, they paid for a group of young people to visit the Mill Adventure Base near Mansfield. At the Mill we held an **"Interactive Drug and Alcohol Workshop."** We then did some supervised High- Ropes Climbing and ate pizza with the Police Officers!

This year we have been blessed with £1000 from the **Parish Council** that paid for two new Table-Tennis Tables and a Pool Table. The **Community Café** also generously donated £100 which will fund outdoor equipment for our Summer Sessions. The local Council pay for the Hire of the Community Centre during the winter months. We are extremely grateful and give praise for these donations, as it means that we have never had to charge the young people.

Financial Summary

We do not have a Bank Account and we do not charge the young people to attend. The sale of soft drinks and chocolate bars just about covers the cost of replacing the table-tennis balls. £1000 from

the Parish Council and £100 from the Community Café are the only incomings that we have received this year. (In order to pay for the hire of

the Community Centre, the Parish Council simply transfers the money from the appropriate Community Awards Grant.)

Items of Prayer

- **More Young People come to know Christ**
- **More friendly faces volunteer their time on a Friday night**
- **We have the right words to say when asked “What do you believe?”**

Our numbers fluctuate week-to-week. If it is God’s will we are keen to continue. We simply ask that you pray that we are there for the young people who are looking to find Jesus’s love.

(A girl who attended Youth Club a couple of years ago recently dropped in and said:

“Thank you for being there for me when everyone else thought I was a w*nker! I’m not anymore. I’ve grown up and matured loads. But you never judged me!” - These are the sort of young people we would like you to pray for!)

If anyone feels that they would like to give up just one Friday night a month, we would really appreciate it. No training or experience necessary. (We just talk to young people, if they want to talk. Often they don’t though, which is also fine!)

We pray that we find the right words to say. It can be daunting to be out on the fringes of the Church, publicly declaring your faith. (One young man was walking around shouting and punching people, when he saw us he screamed: ***“You lot can F*ck Off! This is my park! Get lost!”*** We simply offered him a smile and a handshake. On seeing the ***Ichthys*** embroidered on our T-Shirts he then said: ***“Do you consider yourselves Old Testament or New Testament then?”***

Within five minutes he had put down his can of lager and apologised for swearing. He then stood and talked to us. He was simply an angry young man, who didn’t know why he felt that way. He just wanted to be listened to. We have no doubt that in that moment we were given the right words to say – We really needed them too!)

(Youth Outreach is an “Open Access” project and everyone is welcome to come and go as they please. During the Summer we meet each Friday night on Underwood Recreation Ground, including in the Summer Holidays. Next Winter, God willing, we hope to be back in Underwood Community Centre again - term-time only though. Our meetings are 18:30-20:30)

Jamie and Kate Spriggs, Andy Thomas

16. ELECTION OF TREASURER

Andrew Palmer proposed, and Jane Fletcher seconded that Helen Baker be elected Treasurer. All agreed.

17. ELECTION OF PCC SECRETARY

Peter Fletcher proposed, and Bob Tyers seconded that Andy Palmer be elected Secretary. All agreed.

18. ELECTION OF PLANNED GIVING SECRETARY

Helen Baker proposed, and Christine Smith seconded that Andy Palmer continues to be the Planned Giving Secretary. All agreed.

19. SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Tracy Palmer had agreed to accept the role of SGO, in 2019 and continues in the post.

20. ELECTION OF PCC MEMBERS

No election held. we have 1 vacancy.

As a reader Paul Lake Co-opted to the PCC.

ELECTION TO THE DEANERY SYNOD

Christine Smith proposed, and Paul Lake seconded that Peter Fletcher be elected as representative to the Deanery synod.

Sarah Harker proposed, and Gayna Hall seconded that Paul Lake be elected as representative to the Deanery synod.

21. ELECTION OF AUDITOR

Helen Baker proposed, and Jane Fletcher seconded that Howard Jones be appointed as the auditor.

22. VICAR'S REPORT

At the start of the year, none of us could have envisioned what has happened as a result of the covid 19 pandemic. It has been encouraging to see how we have pulled together and supported one another and found fresh ways to still function as the church. With so much change and uncertainty around the Christian message that God is still in control and does loves us, has never been more relevant. The lockdown has had huge implications which will have long term repercussions. As I reflect on the current situation it is clear to see that it has presented its fair share of **challenges** but also **opportunities**

Challenges. Despite the lockdown and the frustration of not being able to meet all together as a church we have non the less continued to worship God. It has been a steep learning curve for all of us, getting used a different way of working and especially adapting to new technologies. A big thank you to Paul, Rachel and Sarah for sharing all their expertise in this area and for generously facilitating services to be streamed in both parishes.

While it has been good to be able to get back into church, understandably not everyone feels confident or able to return to church yet and the current restrictions mean that we are still not able to do many of the things that we would like to do, so for the foreseeable future we will continue to stream our services of morning prayer. The PCC has decided for the time being not to have Holy Communion services. The intention is to make this a sacrifice of prayer for God to resolve this crisis. While we are denied this aspect of our spiritual food it is important that we make some extra effort to sustain our spiritual life, through reading scripture and prayer. Currently we are exploring the possibility of setting up some small groups for advent.

One of the ongoing challenges is ensuring that those who are not confident with modern technology are not overlooked. A key question that we must address is how can we best continue to support one another?

Opportunities. We have had far more people viewing the services than would normally attend them. This should not surprise us as people struggle with their mental health, we know that God offers a real peace that even the fiercest storms cannot disturb. While this is really encouraging, going forward the challenge will be to continue to engage with these people and help them in their journey of faith so that they become lifelong disciples.

While many of our regular activities have not been able to continue, we have been able to adapt and do some different things. It has been especially encouraging to see how so many people have engaged with different ways to pray and to hear how God has answered those prayers.

A big thanks you to everyone who has helped in any way to support the life and ministry of the parish during this difficult time, especially the churchwardens.

Although unfortunately many of us who would have liked to be present were unable to do so, it has been a real blessing that Paul and Rachel were licensed last Sunday as lay ministers.

Going forward

The immediate future looks uncertain, as cases of the virus once again are on the rise. It is easy to allow the current crisis to get us down and to lose hope. As psalm 121 reminds us we need to lift our eyes up to the mountain where does my help come from? Our help comes from none other than the maker of heaven and earth.

While we are enormously grateful for the hard work and dedication of our health care professionals and continue to pray for all those working to discover treatments and vaccines, as Christians we should not be placing our sole trust in them to find a solution to this dreadful pandemic which will allow us to return to some sort of normal life. Nothing is impossible for God! I believe that we should continue to pray that God will have mercy on us and quickly deliver us from this dreadful mess that we might once again lift our voices to praise him for his goodness and love.

For all of us this has been a testing time, but this need not be a negative experience. As we prove once again that God is faithful, our faith deepens and our trust in God grows. Not only that we become much more confident to share with others what God has done for us.

My prayer for us all is that we will emerge from this pandemic both individually and as a church with a stronger faith and better equipped to reach out to our community with the love of God.

23. Rev David closed the meeting with the blessing.

Signed

Date