

St. Lawrence with St. Paul, Longridge.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on 24th May 2021.

Present: Revd. Mike Barton, Chris Page, Theresa Page, Graham Kelsall, Ali Ng, Muriel Anderson, Canon Stuart Broughton, Kathryn Broughton, Wendy Smyth, Vernon Kinrade, Marilyn Kinrade, Karen Burdett, Andrew Burdett, Peter Turver, Lib Turver, Rosemary Lyons, Barbara McCormick, Val Wardley, Lawrence Ingham, Michael Dawson, Ellen Dawson, Barbara Burton, Keith Thompson, Fred Little, Dot Little, Malcolm Welch, Dorothy Laver

The meeting was chaired by the Vicar who explained that it was not all that long ago we had our last APCM in October 2020, but this meeting now brings us back in line with the dates according to Diocesan regulations.

The Vicar went on to explain that following new Church Representation Rules the agenda looked a little different to previous years.

Following this introduction and welcome the meeting commenced with prayer.

Apologies were received from: Karen Boardman, David Hartley and Janet Heap

Following a proposal by Teresa Page, seconded by Muriel Anderson, the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners held on 12th October 2020 were approved as a true record. There were no matters arising.

Election of Churchwardens.

The vicar was delighted to be able to return to a full complement of two church wardens last October following on from Chris Pages great work as solo churchwarden. The great news is that both Dot Little and Ali Ng have agreed to stand again this year as Churchwardens, which is a great encouragement for the whole church and will provide vital stability and wisdom as we seek to open up the church to the new missional opportunities coming out of the Coronavirus Lockdown presents, while also restarting the fruitful activities we have missed greatly.

The vicar was able to announce that two people had put their names forward for election as Churchwarden for the term ahead:

Dorothy Ann Little, proposed by Chris Page, seconded by Muriel Anderson

Alethea (Ali) Jane Ng proposed by Graham Kelsall, seconded by Barbara McCormick

The vicar asked if there were any further nominations, and there were none

With two Churchwarden positions and two people standing, Dot and Ali were duly elected as the new Churchwardens for St. Lawrence with St. Paul.

Deputy Churchwardens as ex-officio members of the PCC will be elected in a short PCC meeting which will follow the public meetings.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed.

St. Lawrence with St. Paul, Longridge.

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Meeting, held on 24th May 2021.

Present: See attendance list for Annual meeting of Parishioners (Vestry meeting) above.
Apologies were received from: Karen Boardman, David Hartley and Janet Heap

Vernon Kinrade proposed and Peter Turver seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on the 12th October, 2020 were an accurate record. The motion was unanimously supported.

Matters arising:

In any other business 2020, Gwyneth Jones reported the smell of gas on the meter cupboard at St Lawrence's. Vernon Kinrade confirmed that checks were made and this has now been dealt with.

David Hartley felt the light above the door at St Lawrence was not adequate. This will be brought up at the next PCC meeting to be actioned.

Electoral Roll. The number currently on the Electoral Roll is 212 (212 at the October 2020 APCM).

Three people were added, those being Sam Reynolds, Katherine Broughton, Emma Pettitt and sadly three people previously on the roll have passed away. Doreen Dixon, Gwyneth Jones and Doreen Robinson were remembered with a period of silence.

To receive an annual report on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally, presented by Revd. Mike Barton.

This vicar's report is for the period between 13th October 2020 to 24th May 2021 which brings us back into line with a pattern of holding the APCMs in the spring of each year. It does however mean that the time since October 2020 has come around quick. I want to update you on a few of the things that have happened and then briefly point to what I hope we can expect to be some of the themes until the end of the year. As we come out of Covid though all of us are far more aware we can take nothing for granted. Since the last APCM many things are worth noting, I'll mention just a few. In terms of finance, while there are challenges ahead, we came into 2021 with a very small deficit which is testament to the faithfulness of many congregation members who continued to support the church financially throughout the Covid lockdowns, whether through standing orders, one off donations, giving in church when we were able to worship, or through consistently dropping off envelopes through the Vicarage door. I'm thankful to you all. As a church we must also say a huge thank you to Graham Kelsall for all the time and effort he puts into preparing the budget, paying the bills, tracking our expenditure and managing costs. If you can excuse the pun, we owe him and others who help behind the scenes like Jacqui Taylor and Dorothy Laver a debt of gratitude. In terms of buildings and fabric. It's evident, how much good will there is towards St Lawrence Church from within our local community because the St Lawrence Repair Fund has been well supported on and offline which has enabled us to complete Phase 1 of the repairs to the tower with minimal fuss – Thanks must especially go to Rosemary Lyons for all her onsite visits and coordinating the work with Linda Jubb and Heritage Property Repairs. Thanks also go to Terry Lewis, Vernon Kinrade, Malcolm Welch and Ali Ng who is now a Church Faculty processing master! I cannot finish this little section without also giving a special acknowledgment for all the faithful service Eileen Fordham and her sister Marjorie Proctor have given to our Parish in both cleaning St Lawrence Church and running the flower rota among many other notable things worth celebrating. If tonight were the Oscars both would be receiving a lifetime achievement award. In terms of Safeguarding. We continue to prioritise high Safeguarding standards and don't take it for granted, we haven't had any reported safeguarding incidents during the period and we are fortunate in this parish to have both a Safeguarding Officer, Janet Redding whose report you can read and a Safeguarding Administrator Barbara McCormick. Their work is supplemented by Muriel Anderson who is the Champion for Vulnerable adults and Emily Coolican who is the Advocate for Children and Young People. In this the PCC has complied with our duty to have due regard to House

of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. In terms of personnel. Sam Reynolds has been a real help to me in his role as Parish Administrator during the entire period of the Covid Lockdown. His creativity, design and production skills have been a real blessing. Now things are opening again Sam has decided to step down from the Parish Administrator role so he can focus on growing his design business as the opportunities increase. Sam will continue to do his Authorised Lay Minister course on the topic of preaching with Blackburn Diocese which he started in January as he seeks to explore how he might be able to serve with us here at St Lawrence with St Paul. Interviews are taking place to see if we can find a suitable replacement, but in addition to this the other major change will be the arrival of Simon King as our new Curate who will be joined by his wife Tracey. I've met with Simon a number of times, he's a kind, humble gentleman who comes with a good amount of life experience, considerable marketing skills, and a lovely pastoral heart. I know you're going to warmly welcome him as he and Tracey settle into their new situation with all the different expectations such a public role can bring. Please do pick up the Ember Card he's made so we can pray for them both in the run up to Simon's ordination. With all that I've mentioned so far, it's important to remember why we do what we do; the reason for all our activity. Our Why, the reason for our existence is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in our service of God and in the power of the Spirit make the love of Jesus known within our community. Here at St Lawrence with St Paul this comes under the umbrella of our church vision, Following Jesus in Loving Community So in terms of our Worship and Ministry over the last season there are a few things I'd like to highlight. Firstly, there is a positive 'can do attitude' developing within our church culture. This has brought genuine hope for many during tough times. I've seen this in our online Zoom Morning Prayers, Alpha, Bible and Prayer Courses, in our returning to worship in our Church buildings despite all the organisational complexity, in the types of service we've been able to offer for a range of worship style and preferences, in the inventiveness of the Church Lads and Church Girls Brigade who have creatively and steadfastly continued to be there for the children and help them to interact with one another online and in person. We've seen it in the Christmas and Easter services where Rebekah and the choir were able to sing with very little notice and all of us were able to sing Thine be the Glory outside. Then there was the Confirmation Service which truly felt like a special celebration of our Young people's faith. Perhaps one event which truly exemplifies this 'can do' attitude though was the 'Carol's in the Car Park' concert in the pouring rain at St Paul's. We owe a great deal of thanks to Mike Oates and his team at Production Box who helped with all the equipment and technical support, and what joy this brought to those who attended and also what an important message it sent out to the wider community about the church being the light of the world. Secondly, there are the exciting things that have been bubbling up under the surface. This is especially the case in our youth work where thanks to a special Launchpad course Heather Henderson and I were able to attend, a comprehensive plan has been developed for the next few years and this is already producing a good deal of fruit in the form of Youth Chat and the latest initiative on the back of this which is Youth Alpha. A great team of older and younger youth leaders is emerging within our church and it's brilliant to see. Then there is also the new team of leaders that are growing through their experience of leading and serving at the 11.15 All Age Worship Service. Since the early days of Children's' Church these leaders have grown in confidence, capacity and faith. This has proven to be a real example of every member ministry, where the philosophy of 'if you come, you serve' is going to be vital for the future development of disciples and also the church. Thirdly, there is our church community's resilience. Covid has impacted people in many ways but gradually week by week it's lovely to see the faces of people I've not seen in a while return to our church buildings to worship and also a consistent group of people who watch our services online, some for whom geography and circumstance makes their physical presence impossible. I'm pleased to report that I've already done two weddings this year, more are to come, and baptism enquiries are once again increasing. However, people choose to engage with St Lawrence with St Paul it's brilliant to have you worshipping with us. This brings me onto some final thoughts about what I see as our

church's priorities to the end of the year. These all come under the theme of Higher Horizons and are about our approach as we unlock from Lockdown. Many of you will be aware that I like to run around the Jeffrey Hill loop for exercise and I tend to do it in an anticlockwise direction taking the right fork past Beacon Fell holiday park first and returning via the golf club. Well as you're slogging your way up the stretch from the New Drop pub to the summit of the hill, it's not a good idea to look too far ahead because the slope and the length of the climb can be discouraging. For this reason, I keep my gaze fairly close to my feet and focus my energy on simply putting one foot in front of the other. The last 15 months have felt a bit like this. However, as you go around the bend at the top (if it's good weather) you're rewarded with a beautiful view of Parlick and Fairsnape and then to the coast. With the wonderful view to the horizon, you can't help but lift your eyes and praise God, even if you are panting somewhat! A few weeks ago, when I did this run though I was struck by the thought that as we come out of lockdown to lift our gaze, we should not let our human view to the horizon limit our ambition, rather in faith we should look to the Higher Horizons that God has in store. With this in mind I'd like us to lift our eyes to Higher Horizons in Worship. Perhaps a verse to encourage us in this could be Isaiah 40.31. Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint. Until the end of the year we'll be continuing in this year's vision emphasis of Following Jesus in Whole Life Worship and I'd like each of us to learn some of the lessons of lockdown by creating some personal rules for life so that moving forward we give appropriate time and attention to our Spiritual, Relational, Physical and Mental habits knowing that we worship God with all that we are and if one of these areas gets out of kilter we store up all sorts of trouble. With this in mind, over the summer, during June in the 9.30 and 6.30 services we'll be doing a mini-series to help us process the impact of Covid under the themes of 'Remember, Recover and Reimagine. At the 9.30 service this will then be followed by a longer series under the title 'Jesus, Gentle and Lowly' which is based on a book by the same name. The aim is to help us rest in the beauty of worshipping Christ rather than necessarily jump into feeling we have to do lots of things. Revd. Gill Mack will also be leading in the reinstatement of 10am Thursday Morning Communion in St Paul's Centenary Room with a likely start date of 24th June if the Lockdown rules come to an end, Then I'd like us to lift our eyes to higher horizons in Generosity Proverbs 11.25 is the springboard verse here: A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. Part of my hope for us as a church as we unlock from lockdown is that we will grow in two areas of generosity. These are generosity in hospitality and generosity in giving. In terms of generosity in hospitality it's amazing to see how many of Jesus' most powerful interactions with people involve food. And Jesus deliberately of course instituted the Lord's supper. As it becomes increasingly safe to do so I'd love us to become a church of people who show generous hospitality towards one another, inviting each other round for simple meals, maybe a BBQ, a lunch or dinner. Let's celebrate being able to be in each other's company once again and please let's welcome those we don't necessarily know into our homes. Then when it comes to Generosity in Giving, we see in Graham's Treasurers report, we can't keep setting deficit budgets if we want our church to survive. Often generosity involves sacrifice and somehow, we've got to train ourselves and members of our congregation to return to a traditional benchmark of a regular 10% tithe. Even Christians Against Poverty clients who are recovering from debt learn to do this. For this reason, the fourth 'R' I'll be preaching on in June is Re-financing and this is one of a number of steps we'll be taking to help us grow in generosity of giving. Finally, I'd like us to lift our eyes to Higher Horizons in Mission You can probably guess that the verse for this is the Great Commission, Matthew 28.19. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. To support mission locally we need to develop a mindset where we see ourselves as being disciples who make disciples. To train us up in this I'm very much hoping to start a Growing Leaders course from September this year. For the participants this involves an evening commitment once a month considering topics such as Character, Call, Competence, and the Community you're in. Participants are

also expected to meet with a mentor once a month to help them process the material. I'm hoping this might be something we might introduce year on year to help us grow and develop emerging leaders. One of my other hopes as we lift our eyes to higher horizons in mission engagement is to look beyond Lancashire towards worldwide mission, particularly where it concerns the ambitions, aspirations and vision of our children and youth. So, drawing inspiration from the example of Gwyneth Jones we'll be exploring a mission partnership with a couple called Tim and Anna who are travelling out to Indonesia to volunteer with OMF - the same organisation Gwyneth volunteered with for 30 years. They're just awaiting their visas, so this seems like a perfect time to support them as they embark on their journey. As they step out in faith, I'm sure we too can be inspired by their witness. Our support would look like a commitment to pray for them as a church, and the children and youth could be encouraged to host fundraising activities to support their costs. Well, I've covered a fair amount of ground which I hope has given a good insight into the journey ahead in the next few months. I close now with a prayer. Go before us, Lord, in all our doings, with your most gracious favour, and further us with your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name, and finally by your mercy attain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

To receive the Financial Statements of the PCC for the year ending 31st December 2020, presented by Treasurer Graham Kelsall.

The key figures from the 2020 Annual Accounts are, income £216,634, expenditure £217,002, deficit £368, total cash at year end £135,576 and value of our investments at the year-end £303,728. We then proceeded to look at each of the figures in turn. Income: Income overall for 2020 was £23,413 higher than in 2019. One of the key things to note is that our total income from planned giving and collections at services decreased from £63,788 in 2019 to £60,541 in 2020. There was an increase in planned giving, and a reduction in collections at services – which is not surprising considering the number of weeks we had to remain closed. Thanks, was expressed to all Parishioners. Another thing to note was that the Gift Aid we had been able to reclaim in 2020 was significantly higher than in 2019. This was in fact due to the final gift aid claims being submitted re roof donations along with gift aid claims being up to date. Obviously, there was no Spring or Christmas fairs, however the 'Santa Totaliser' in December generated over £7,000, which was a fabulous response. Printing – other churches not printing as many copies of their magazine during the pandemic, Book stall – as church closed much of the year, Interest, & Newsham Legacy income were all down. Income from legacies was down, as was income from fees for weddings and funerals, which reflected a period at the beginning of the pandemic where the Diocese waived their fees as did the PCC, and an increasing prevalence of funerals just at the crematorium. Moving on to our expenditure at £217,002, this was £30,660 lower than in 2019. Our expenditure on Parish Share was the same as the previous year, and reflected the fact that, after discussions, the Diocese agreed to leave the request the same. I confirm that in 2020 we paid our Parish Share in full. Clergy and staffing costs were also lower, again reflecting a reduction in costs whilst we were closed, particularly in respect of the Director of Music. The main decrease was in Repairs and Maintenance where we spent £81,165 in total, a reduction of £18,429 over the 2019 level. As mentioned last time some invoices for the work at St Pauls were only received and settled in 2020. Whilst there were some other slight differences the bulk of the reduction of £30,399 was achieved in reduced costs of Repairs and Maintenance and 'savings' due to the enforced closure of the Churches. One final point to note regarding expenditure is regarding printing costs of £7,482 (£7,711 in 2019), this should be seen in the context of income from printing (£2,973) and income from The Log (£4,723). Overall printing costs were lower, but so was income from printing. Printing costs for ourselves (so excluding printing costs for others) were higher as during some of the pandemic we were not able to use service 'booklets' and so had to print 'longer' service sheets, using more paper etc. – thankfully we are now able to use service booklets again. In general, 'printing' generates

income for the Parish. Having looked at income and expenditure we confirmed that the net position for the year is a deficit of £368 – truly remarkable considering the circumstances and means that despite everything we basically delivered a balanced budget for the second year. We looked briefly at the transfers between funds that are recorded in the accounts, where we had transferred £904 out of Unrestricted designated funds into general funds, and similarly where we had transferred £291 from general funds into restricted funds. This year we did not draw any funds from our investments. We then looked at the cash (£135,576) and looked at the four bank accounts we hold in addition to the cash held with the Diocese, and how some of the cash at the Diocese was restricted (being the Haighton legacy cash). As you know the PCC plans to use the Haighton legacy cash (which is restricted to use at St Lawrence) to fund some of the repairs required to the Tower Roof, the lady, and memorial chapels etc. Finally, we looked at our investments where the value had increased from £254,519 to £272,038, and the value of our ‘other shares’ that have decreased from £33,243 to £31,690. We confirmed that the ‘other shares’ are the United Utilities shares we hold as part of the Haighton legacy – these cannot be sold, however the dividend income goes into the Haighton legacy ‘cash’ account, which can then be spent on the purpose of the legacy (the upkeep of St Lawrence church and the church yard). Our other investments are held with the Central Investment Fund, and the value of these can go up or down, in 2020 we saw an increase. As we all know 2020 was an unusual year to say the least, and the accounts reflect these strange times with enforced church closures and restrictions on fund raising. The fact that we balanced the books is mainly down to reduced costs associated with being closed. We wrote in The Log earlier this year to thank Parishioners for their donations, and I’d like to reiterate that thanks now. Thanks also to Jacqui Taylor who does such a great job as Gift Aid Secretary, and to Dorothy Laver for her assistance.

Finally, the budget for 2021 set by the PCC, which excludes the work being done at St Lawrence’s, shows a projected deficit of over £25,000, a position which is of course not sustainable in the long term. We will be joining the Parish Giving Scheme – see The Log for more details about this – as well as looking at ways to encourage people to prayerfully consider their regular giving to try and reduce this deficit. Put simply we don’t have enough money coming in to pay our bills.

There were no questions asked, so the presentation closed.

To receive the Annual Fabric Report *presented by Ali Ng and Dot Little*

As Churchwardens Dot and I are immensely grateful for the support we have received since we were elected as Churchwardens last October. Although we have not completed a full year of service much has happened since then. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the other members of the standing committee, duty wardens, stewards, intercessors, readers, flower arrangers, cleaners and all those running our groups in extraordinary circumstances. Reopening would not have been possible without each and every person who has helped. In the end, we only closed for three Sundays in January with the All-Age service restarting at the same time the schools re-opened. Attendance across the three services is now averaging 100-120 each week. We would like to take the opportunity to thank Rebekah and the choir for enhancing our worship with the singing and we hope and pray that it will not be too long before the congregation can sing again - something we both miss greatly. Now moving onto Fabric. The terrier is now in electronic form and can be viewed upon request, items added are the two sofas, television, and live streaming equipment at St Paul’s. February this year marked 12 months since completion of the work to re-roof the two aisles at St Paul’s. Our contractors Heritage Conservation visited again to make sure that everything was going smoothly and that we continue to be fully watertight. The aisle roof timbers have also been monitored on a regular basis to make sure that they are drying out satisfactorily. With this major roof project now successfully completed, it is prudent that we look ahead to the next repair items that need to be done to keep the building in good condition. We have had a

Structural Assessment carried out on some issues that were flagged up in the last Quinquennial Inspection in 2017, including deterioration of parts of the tower roof deck and the stone tower pinnacles. Some remedial work will need to be carried out, and we are aiming to move on to this once repairs at St Lawrence are completed, and in advance of our next Quinquennial Inspection which is due in August 2022. It is likely that we will need to look towards grant funding to pay for this work. The heating at St Paul's has continued to prove a challenge. At the moment, the heating isn't separated- so when the Centenary room is on the whole church is on and vice versa. There is quite a lot that needs looking at - we still have one boiler out, the flues on the other two are rusty and the thermostats (heating control panels) need replacing / moving. There is also an issue with the effectiveness of the radiators on the north side. John Book the Diocesan heating adviser will be coming out to give us advice as to what to do next. We have ascertained that the boilers are 10 years old, so they may be getting to the end of their lifespan. In the meantime, we have agreed to replace the heating control panels immediately and move the one from upstairs. Longridge electrical have fixed two of the spotlights in the sanctuary and all the spotlights have been replaced with LED lights which means that we have brought them back into use. The disabled toilet has had the ball cock in the tank replaced. We obtained a faculty to dispose of the two loose pews - which had been removed at the time the pews on the south aisle were taken out. These were sold using sealed bids and the money placed in the youth fund. In turn, the youth group have obtained two sofas for youth chat and a television. With a grant from the Diocese, we now have the ability to enhance our live-streaming technology and we are hopeful this will happen in the near future. The roof alarm and the lightening conductor have both been tested and passed. Finally, for St Paul's, we do need a proper cleaning rota in place. If this is something that you would like to be part of then please speak to one of us.

From Dot Little Turning to St. Lawrence - We have been on quite a journey since last October's APCM when Chris Page in his Fabric Report reminded us that the Quinquennial inspection at St. Lawrence had highlighted that repairs to areas including the tower, side chapel and remembrance chapel were becoming increasingly more urgent. To emphasise this fact the tower roof started to leak badly in July 2020 forcing us to take urgent action. The PCC agreed that in view of that urgency, cash that had accumulated within the Haighton bequest, left specifically for the up-keep and maintenance of St. Lawrence Church, should be used for the tower roof repairs and those started in February 2021 and completed to a high standard by Heritage Property Repairs just before Easter, when the flag of St. George was hoisted on a new flagpole. Necessary repairs to the clock then followed.

Although the tower roof was the priority the PCC's view was that if at all possible other urgent identified work both in the Lady Chapel and Remembrance chapel should be addressed under Phase 2 & 3 and with the historical importance of St. Lawrence church to the town our hope was that the wider community would support us. Unfortunately, lockdowns and restrictions gave us little opportunity to effectively launch a Repair Fund and of course fundraising through social events was not possible. In many respects it was Peter Turvers walking book that provided the incentive when the fund was re-launched in January 2021 and thanks to the opening of a 'Just Giving' page; some local press coverage and much generosity, the repair fund currently stands at over £22,000. Just as it was the walking book that kick started the fund our hope is that the Marathon walk by Karen Boardman and others on the 19th June will get us to the set target of £25,000. To walk 30 miles in one day is no easy task and we do encourage everyone to get behind Karen and her support walkers as they take on this demanding challenge. You can give through a special 'Just Giving' page set up for this purpose. The £25,000 target if reached will not cover the full cost of the Phase 2/3 work, estimated at nearer £35,000 when fees and VAT are added, but will have been a tremendous effort nevertheless and our sincere thanks go to everyone who has contributed. We are hopeful that this work will be done over the Spring/Summer period. Now briefly to cover one or two other fabric matters at St. Lawrence Church – the heating recently failed,

necessitating a new pump having to be fitted at a cost of £730. The green gates leading up to church were damaged by a vehicle but thanks to Barbara McCormick, JOD Engineering and F & M Powder Coating Specialists the gates have now been fully restored and are looking splendid. Topple testing to ensure headstones are safe in the churchyard, especially the older larger ones is carried out on a regular basis - and also in the churchyard, after seeking professional advice a number of trees on the periphery need pruning and sadly four will have to be felled. New trees will need to be planted elsewhere in the churchyard to replace these. We do thank Malcolm Welch and of course Terry Lewis for their work and interest in the churchyard. More positive news is that with Covid restrictions continuing to ease St. Lawrence church is now open again daily for private prayer and to view the Book of Remembrance. Eileen Fordham has taken well deserved retirement after many years of cleaning St. Lawrence Church and we know what a labour of love that was for Eileen. Thanks to a small group of volunteers this church continues to be regularly cleaned. Marjorie Procter continues as flower secretary at St. Lawrence but due to ill health is no longer able to do the actual flower arrangements. We do thank Paul Lomax for stepping in to do these for us. Fabric matters at both our church buildings perhaps not surprisingly, take up a good deal of our time and increasingly the challenge of maintaining two churches becomes more difficult financially. Ali and I would very much like to thank Rosemary Lyons and Vernon Kinrade for their considerable help on fabric matters and to Rosemary for contributing to this report. But fabric issues must never overshadow the mission and ministry of St. Lawrence with St. Paul and Ali and I will look to support Revd. Mike and our soon to be Curate Simon King as we continue to come out of this pandemic and face the many opportunities as well as the considerable challenges the future will bring. 'Being with one another is almost as important as the air we breathe', one specialist recently reported when discussing the effects of the pandemic- a statement many of us would agree with. We have missed that personal contact over the past year but kept connected through Zoom and live-streamed services. Certainly, Ali and I have appreciated the encouragement we have had when restrictive measures have been put in place so that in-church worship could go ahead. We both feel it's a privilege to serve this parish and community and look forward to hopefully finding our singing voices again as we worship together - and to enjoying each other's company as many of our groups and organisations start to plan their re-start and the social side of parish life resumes. We have many blessings.

To receive a report of the proceedings of the Preston Deanery Synod *presented by Muriel Anderson*

Deanery Synod is part of the way the Church of England gives all of us a chance to discuss key issues and to organise the Church's ministry and mission. The Synod sits between the parishes, with their Parochial Church Councils (PCCs), and the Diocese, with its Diocesan Synod. It consists of all the licensed clergy in the Deanery, plus lay people elected by each parish at their Annual Parish Church Meeting. Deanery Synod lay members are ex officio members of the PCC. Preston Deanery Synod usually meets three times a year. Currently there are 24 clergy members (including our vicar) and 38 lay members. Three lay people were elected to represent Longridge parish at our APCM in 2021 for the period 2020-2023. These were Gwyneth Jones, Muriel Anderson, and Karen Boardman. Sadly, Gwyneth recently died, which means we now have a vacancy for a deanery representative. Current COVID restrictions have meant no Deanery meetings in person, but on Zoom instead. On 22nd October we had a Deanery Bible study on Zoom on Mark's Gospel, led by Revd Ian Paul. Our first Deanery Synod followed. Bishop Philip, Carolyn Barton, and Archdeacon David Picken introduced for discussion our updated Vision 2026 implementation plan for 2021-2024. It sets out how the Diocese intends to support and enable parishes, including ours, in their planning and activities for Healthy Churches Transforming Communities. Carolyn Barton, our Vision Champion Coordinator, discussed with us the assumption some people hold that the Church is in decline. She encouraged us to reject this idea as we learn to adapt. God is transforming His Church and as we are transformed and renewed, so He can use us to transform our community for Him. Revd David Picken discussed with us the marks of a healthy church, how this transformation takes place and the challenges we face. We then discussed pruning, ecumenical partnerships, mentorship, the needs of

lonely and underprivileged people in our parishes, the challenges and opportunities in new housing estates, after-school services, and small local congregations.

To elect parochial lay representatives to Deanery Synod.

Last year we elected three members onto Deanery Synod to start a new three-year term. With Gwyneth's passing at the end of March this leaves one vacant space. Due to the size of electoral role, we are entitled to have up to four representatives from our Parish on the Deanery Synod.

Nomination forms for election to the Deanery Synod had been received from: -

Graham Kelsall proposed by Barbara McCormick, Seconded by Dot Little.

The vicar asked if there were any further nominations, and there were none

The above lay representatives were duly elected to represent St. Lawrence with St. Paul at Deanery Synod.

To elect the Parochial Church Council.

Revd. Mike Barton confirmed that at the start of the Annual Meeting of the Parishioners we had six vacant PCC spaces. Five spaces as a result of PCC terms expiring and one because Lisa Monks has stepped down, due to other commitments. The four following nominations have been received leaving two vacancies unfilled:

Michael Dawson proposed by Graham Kelsall, seconded by Ellen Dawson

Wendy Smyth proposed by Rosemary Lyons, seconded by Lawrence Ingham

Rosemary Lyons proposed by Dot Little, seconded by Wendy Smyth

Christopher Page proposed by Muriel Anderson, seconded by Graham Kelsall

The vicar asked if there were any further nominations, and there were none

All were duly elected

To confirm any Readers as members of the Parochial Church Council.

The vicar reported that we do not need to confirm any readers at this time but wanted to acknowledge and expressed his sincere gratitude to Kathleen Sturzaker who has stepped down as Reader in March after ten years faithful service.

To appoint an Independent Examiner to the Parochial Church Council.

As agreed at the last APCM we appointed McDade Roberts Accountants to become our independent examiner as their costing were more favourable. It was therefore proposed by Graham Kelsall, seconded by Ali Ng, and agreed by the meeting that McDade Roberts Accountants Ltd would be asked to check the 2021 accounts.

Any Other Business.

Lawrence Ingham reported that onlooking through the Church of England's rules for APCM minutes that we had not displayed Octobers 2020 APCM minutes on our website. The last minutes to view are from the 2019 APCM. Barbara McCormick would investigate this matter.

Kathryn Broughton suggested that with the new homes now in the area would it be possible to send out single invitations to welcome newcomers. Perhaps a simple booklet to encourage people to come and visit?

The Vicar confirmed that Sidespeople were now elected by the PCC at a meeting which would follow the APCM but took the opportunity to express thanks to Lawrence Ingham for helping with Giving machine and to thanks all the people who turn up early to services and stay late to ensure people coming to church receive a warm welcome. This has been especially important this last year and its much appreciated.

Revd Mike closed the meeting with prayer and a Blessing.

