

PCC Report 2020-21

Since the last APCM, the PCC has met just 4 times, via Zoom.

The routine items on its agenda, including the Churchwarden's Report, the Mission and Outreach item and the Financial Report, are probably sufficiently covered in the corresponding reports from the Vicar, the Churchwarden and the Treasurer which have been produced for this meeting.

Three major items, however, have been passed to us from Diocesan and/or Deanery level. The first was the Bishop of Dover's exercise entitled "Listening and Discerning On the Way", for which we produced responses for the first round of questions but saw no real point in revisiting this for the second round.

The second was a consultation document about Deanery Organisation, with an almost impossible time-frame, to which we responded through Elizabeth, our representative on the Deanery Mission and Ministry Committee, who was joined by Fr Neil when it started functioning as a Planning Group. We have made it clear that we see no future for a structure within the county town that might allow no room for diversity and might result in loss of identity and buildings without sufficient attention to the possible consequences for ministry. This exercise on Deanery Organisation – which is really about Canterbury's dire financial state – will continue; the report on the initial discussions, entitled "Towards a Flourishing and Sustainable Future", has now appeared.

The third item was the massive report entitled "Living in Love and Faith", which will go to General Synod next year and which the Bishop of Dover is encouraging the diocese to discuss at every level. A course booklet has been produced and the diocese intends to distribute this widely. The PCC was not excited by this and feels disinclined to mount a course, especially under the present conditions, when, as is suggested by the document I have just mentioned, there are urgent matters of mission to consider. While we are quite clear that we welcome everyone to this church regardless of orientation, we support Fr Neil in his decision not to celebrate same-sex marriages even if the upshot of the discussions is that General Synod finally approves them.

One new development this year is that the diocese has required all PCC members to complete a basic online safeguarding course. We have been happy to report to Safeguarding Officer Janet Digby-Baker that we have all done it.

Activities: For obvious reasons the only activity recently in prospect has been our Walsingham Pilgrimage, which was to have taken place this month, and this has unfortunately had to be cancelled. There has, however, been the chance of joining the Resolution parishes' pilgrimage in August, which two members of St Michael's now hope to do.