



St James's Church Piccadilly

Summary of Parochial Church Council Meeting Monday 25 April 2022 18:30-21.00 Church Hall and by Zoom

There was a good turnout among members of the PCC for their latest meeting on Monday 25 April with a long agenda and much to discuss. As usual, the meeting commenced and ended with prayers.

There was an update and full discussion about the new Strategy Framework Proposal which will be presented to the congregation after the PCC awayday in June. It has drawn together work done with the Curiosity Society, Mission Action Plan and congregation and the framework is the basis from which all activities flow; we need to concentrate our resources and become better at partnerships which requires change and a focused approach.

There was a discussion on the Lent, Holy Week and Easter liturgies and events, Covid 19 updates and the post of Associate Rector. A great deal in the church had happened during Holy Week, such as washing feet, baking bread, and sharing it at Dawn, and the all-night vigil. Contemplative Space during Lent was held online on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The donkey was popular, and families clearly engaged in Maundy Thursday including walking around the garden with candles. Some feedback had said there was a magical atmosphere, and this was powerful as not necessarily what people were expecting. The PCC was appreciative of the Director of Music programming during the Lent Sunday Eucharists, all-women composers sung by the Lay Singers and Scholars. There was an inconclusive discussion on advice to continue to wear face masks. Varying points were made but the current situation with advice from the national church would remain for the time being. There were those in favour of the former practice of gathering around the altar but also concerns that the death rate and infection rate from Covid is still high enough not to return to this practice. Some were in favour of the return of the distribution of wine but others against even if it were a matter of individual choice. Welcomers at the door explain that the gallery is distanced and that encouraging masks is already in our literature but there was no consensus. A new Assistant Rector has been appointed and was announced on the following Sunday with a start on 24 July on a 5-year contract: The Revd Ayla Lepine is the Ahmanson Fellow in Religion and Art at the National Gallery in London, she will be full-time and her job description is focussed on the pastoral care of the congregation.

The PCC discussed in full the arrangements for the APCM for 8 May.

The Giving Team reported that maybe 60-70 people had attended 'Being St James's' physically or online; some 16/17 feedback forms had been received. Some new people found it valuable to talk about things and there was a discussion about giving.

Brian Willetts reported that the overarching main campaign called 'The Heart of St James's' is doing well. The PCC was very glad to hear the news that HRH Prince Edward, The Earl of Wessex has agreed to become Patron of the Wren Project and that has already raised interest from some potential donors. Brian Willetts reported on his trip to New York for two weeks in February: Christie's USA are organising a gala auction and dinner in New York on 14 September as well as other receptions – they want to raise >\$1m for St. James's. St Barts of Park Avenue NYC are looking at having ongoing links with SJP and our Rector Lucy Winkett will meet online with their Rector in the first instance. Brian Willetts made good connections at Trinity Wall Street too.

Finally, our Creative Director Richard Parry reported on his work so far and his first thoughts on what potential projects could find a place at St James's; the exhibition by the Scottish poet Thomas Clarkson 'peace in three colours' would be at St James's for three weeks in May.

The date of the PCC's next meeting will be on both Saturday 11 June - strategic planning and Wren Project awayday and the PCC on Sunday 12 June.

I look forward to keeping you informed.

Keith Best
PCC Secretary