

Reports of the
102nd
Annual Parochial
Church Meeting
of
St Paul's Church Rusthall

May 2021

St Paul's Parish Fellowship

A note from the Chairperson

2020 started with our New Year party which went off very well and we had four more meetings, well attended and enjoyable including attendance at the Ash Wednesday service, but the Fellowship has not met since. Many of our members have been shielding. Our secretary of many years, Muriel Reeves, has relocated to Pevensey and she is very much missed. The Fellowship couldn't say a proper goodbye but hope to remedy this when meetings resume.

I have kept in touch with phone calls to many members, also sending Christmas cards and other cards.

We hope that we will be able to meet soon, as restrictions start to lift.

Zillah Witt

Fairtrade Cafe 2020

There hasn't been a Fairtrade café since March 2020 as we couldn't meet up, although we did order and sell Fair Trade goods from home to a few loyal customers who requested items. Inevitably sales were very reduced during the year.

Rosemary Romano
Liz Goddard

Tunbridge Wells Deanery Synod Report for the year April 2020 to April 2021

The Synod met on two occasions during the past year. The first meeting was a Zoom meeting on Wednesday 1st July 2020, hosted by Douglas Wren, Area Dean, who welcomed everyone and opened with prayer. The accounts for 2019 presented by Martyn Atkinson, Treasurer, were received. Mrs Tina Clay had agreed to examine the 2020 accounts and her appointment was approved. Then followed a talk by The Rev'd Canon Julie Conalty, Archdeacon of Tunbridge. She gave some of her reflections on the lockdown and the effect on churches. She commended and thanked all who had in many ways, previously unfamiliar to them, responded in providing worship and care to their congregations and those further afield. She encouraged Synod and church members to continue to be kind, supportive and patient as people coped with the restrictions. She said that the diocese is reconfiguring how different things are in different churches and what training is required for pastoral needs. After a time for questions the meeting closed with the Grace.

The second meeting held on Wednesday 18th November 2020 was also a Zoom meeting. Mike Lawes, Lay Chair, opened the meeting with prayer and welcomed members old and new. After a brief explanation of Zoom protocol and "housekeeping" arrangements for the evening, Synod members were divided into breakout rooms, to enable elections to the Standing Committee. The House of Clergy elected Caroline Glass, Stephen Hills and Laurence Powell. The House of Laity first re-elected Mike Lawes as the Lay Chair of Synod and then elected Martin Atkinson, Tony Bourne and Norma Buck as the three lay representatives. Following this was an address by Bishop Simon, in which he spoke about what we might learn as Christians as we go through the Pandemic. Firstly we should have a listening spirit. Secondly we need a bold heart to speak out about Jesus Christ. Thirdly we need practical caring hands to reach out to the community and beyond. Bishop Simon's address was recorded and the link to his talk and the pass code to access it, are available from Barbara Bourne 01892 520492. Comments and questions followed, after which Bishop Simon closed the meeting with prayer.

Because of the remaining uncertainties of the coming months, the Standing Committee has decided to schedule just two meetings for this year, 2021, on Wednesday 23rd June and Wednesday 20th October. The June meeting will take place during the period when Bishop Simon will be in Tunbridge Wells on a weeklong visit to the deanery. Although the full programme for his visit has not yet been finalized we know it will include a Confirmation Service at St Paul's Church and a visit to one of the local food banks.

Tony Bourne