

Parish of Deddington with Clifton and Hempton

Minutes of the ZOOM PCC meeting held on Wednesday, 1st July 2020

Present:

Rev. Annie Goldthorp	Caroline Condon	Angela Everett
Olivia Fenion	Meriel Flux	Iain Gillespie
Heather Nason	Rev. Paula Smith	Stan Nelson (H&S)
		Sue McCouaig – Secretary

Apologies: Stephanie Dakin

Paula opened the meeting in prayer.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the way forward concerning our Church Services, with the easing of the lockdown restrictions, and in particular how soon should the various services recommence?

Ahead of our meeting, yesterday, Annie had forwarded the latest COVID-19 bulletin from the Diocese to the PCC, to read before the meeting. What should we be thinking about before opening our church for worship again? Annie had also received from the Archdeacon, within the last 5 minutes, the Central Church of England guidance, giving the latest information on Public Worship. This is not the final version.

The preferred guidance is still to continue streaming services, rather than risk infection by opening buildings too much.

We need to think about our

- Weekly Sunday Worship Services
- Wednesday Worship
- Morning Prayer

Annie feels we could do Morning Prayer. Wednesday, we might, depending on whether people want to come back. Sunday, Annie thinks it is a bit too early. However, that's what we are here to discuss.

Annie had also received some requests:-

- James would quite like to come back and do something.
- The Bellringers are now allowed to do some ringing, but only for a short amount of time. As they are now completely out of practice, they may possibly, have a go at handbells in church, in the meantime.
- Request from the band, to recommence their practices in church.

All of this, including whether we open the church for public worship, will make the task of cleaning more difficult.

Stan Nelson, as Health and Safety Officer commented that his understanding from reading the document, was that there could not be any music in services, as people would automatically want to sing along.

He suggested that we send out a questionnaire to current parishioners to see how many might want to currently return to services in church, or when they would feel comfortable returning to services in church. There was agreement for this.

Caroline commented that it is the older generation who are more at risk, and are therefore less likely to return to services in church in the short term. Olivia also agreed with this and felt it is currently best to carry on streaming the services.

Meriel commented that James could do music in church, whilst we are still streaming. James has also said to Annie, that he would be happy to play music in between the readings and the Gospel, also whilst still streaming. Meriel also said that from reading the document it did say that one individual could sing or

chant, if they are behind a screen or flexi-glass. If we are still streaming, would there be potential to have someone at the back of church to sing? Annie would think on this. Would certainly like to get music back in the church, as people miss the organ. No hymns, just music!

Iain commented he would not currently be happy about the brass band coming back into church yet.

Any groups using the church, would have to be responsible for cleaning afterwards. Olivia said this idea is working in other settings. Christine and Iain have been wiping chairs.

Morning prayer – Annie - Before lockdown, if 4 attended, it would be a really good day. There are about 7-9 people watching live streaming. This could continue to be streamed, but also let people attend morning prayer in church. Social distancing of 2 metres could be easily achieved, with the very low numbers that normally attend.

Sunday service - Stan asked how we would seat different groups, i.e. singles, couples and families? Meriel felt that once normal services are resumed, there would be a need for more sides-people, to direct and help seat and support parishioners. Sides-persons would direct people to fill the church from front to back, and at the end of the service, vacate from back to front. There was further discussion of ideas of how this could work.

Angela commented that with more relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions from 4th July, during this next month especially, it is a time of exploration and we are encouraged to do a risk assessment for our church. If there are significant “risk” points, that each of these are looked at in turn, before moving on to the next point. At some stage, if we believe that sitting together in the church and worshipping together is important to us, giving us something that online doesn’t give us, then we have got to go for it, as it will be a risk for sometime.

Annie said there is a risk assessment template on the document she sent out, and a very thorough risk assessment would be carried out, before moving back to services in church together. Annie felt that, other than Morning Prayer, other services would not recommence for quite a long time. Advice from the Diocese is to carry on streaming as much as we can. We don’t want to do anything too quickly!

Angela mentioned the 5 point plan that came up in the information somewhere, about what do you miss about church services, what would you drop and not miss etc. Annie said these sort of questions would be incorporated into the questionnaire/survey.

Annie said that since the beginning of lockdown, that there is now a new online family. We would need to keep some online presence for quite a long time.

Iain asked if the Sunday and Wednesday morning services would still be a Eucharist, as it would be really difficult to do a communion service. Annie said it might be a completely different sort of service. It would be really difficult to do a communion service, unless people just “watched”! Far to risky to do it any other way.

Stan asked about how collections would be done? Currently, people are able to pay by contactless, as well as direct debit. One person would be responsible for the collection plate in church. Stan also enquired whether side persons would be wearing masks? If this is the case, then all persons should be wearing masks, which makes it very difficult. It is hoped that the diocese might lead on this. Annie doesn’t feel this is practical. Meriel felt that it would be preferable to keep the 2 metres apart and no mask! If this cannot be adhered to, and it needs to be 1 metre plus, then a mask should be worn. Not everyone’s health allows them to wear a mask. Ventilation inside is important!

Iain, in answer to a question, said that 35 people currently contribute to the church by direct debit. 12 use envelopes and others put cash in plate.

Annie informed the PCC that service books could not be used, meaning that presentation of services would be by means of the overhead screen, with Iain making a few paper copies. For Morning Prayer, those that come could use a church copy, take it home with them and bring back with them to use again. The service could also be downloaded from the Diocesan website.

Paula felt that some people will be very anxious when they come to church, and so we would need to show compassion to those who need help or want to leave at any point. They should feel comfortable about being able to do this, should they need to. There are first aid responders, who would be willing to help people who feel unwell or faint etc. Identify these persons, and ensure they know they may be called upon, if they are happy to do this.

Children's toys and books etc. have been removed.

- It was agreed that the implementation of the return to church services would be done really slowly, although Morning prayer will recommence next week.
- **Stan and Iain** would undertake a thorough risk assessment.
- **James** won't be playing hymns but will come in on Sundays to play music during the "streamed" services.
- **Meriel** to order more hand sanitiser and one pack of gloves.
- **Meriel** would come up with some questions for the questionnaire to go out to our parishioners.
- **Olivia** will put on the Church facebook page and website that our services will continue to be streamed at present.
- **Annie** would write a letter/email to those on the electoral role and announce it at the streamed service on Sunday. Caroline suggested that in the letter, it would be worth mentioning about "giving"! £420 had been donated by various people during lockdown.

There was a discussion about suitable dates to recommence the Wednesday and Sunday services. Various different start dates were suggested – For Wednesday, perhaps the beginning of August and for Sunday services, the beginning of September, subject to change, depending on what happens.

- **Stan and Iain** – Risk assessment and circulate to PCC by 10th July
- **Meriel** to do questions and forward to Annie, and send out to people by 10th July

PCC to meet again, once these are done. It will give us a clearer picture on timings etc.

Barford and Hempton - Not planning on opening Hempton Church at present. There is a wedding at Barford next Saturday, although not decided about services there yet.

Annie has had official confirmation that Paula's curacy has now ended although she will be with us for a while.

- Bellringers will be allowed to use handbells in church to practice, if they clean up afterwards. They should wear gloves that they provide themselves.

Annie closed the meeting with prayer at 8.50pm