



St. Mary Magdalene Church, Willen Village

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Sunday 8th March at 10.30 at Willen Hospice

**Our Vision Statement
An open, growing and accessible church for
Willen.**

Present: 20 members: Rosemary LeCount, Sharron Marland, Sean Miles, David Icke, Alison Read, Wendy Carey, Lynda Phillips, Rosemary Mawson, Mike Halliwell, Liz Halliwell, Margaret Moakes, Lyn Coppendale, Hilda Kirkwood, David Preston, Pip Coyne, Gina Noors, Paul Smith, Norma Bowden, Cindy Williams, Maria Simonez

1. Opening Prayer was led by the Minister, Paul Smith. Mike Halliwell was Chairman.

2. Apologies for absence were accepted from Susan Armstrong, Derek Armstrong, John Figg, Julie McClay, and Janet Hawkins.

3. Notification of Any Other Business as follows:

- a) Carpet needed in the choir area
- b) Heritage Week 11 – 20 September Registration, Trail and volunteers
- c) Living Archive and commercial film nights at Willen Church
- d) Training and Development Plan URC East Midlands Synod Council
- e) Risk Assessments
- f) Lime Avenue path
- g) Title and legal responsibility of Deputy Church Warden or Church Warden
- h) ERocha next steps on this environment assessment

4. Acceptance of draft Minutes of 2019 Annual General Meeting, after two amendments. Proposed by Paul Smith. and seconded by Wendy Carey.

5. Matters Arising from these Minutes

- a) ACTION: Sean Miles to redo the Collection Counting form
- b) ACTION: Pip Coyne to ask Derek Armstrong to put a note in the next few newsletters, reminding people to sign up to the cleaning rota on the noticeboard.

6. **NOMINATIONS** for representation on Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP) Councils. (See proforma attached for names)

Parish Church Wardens None

Representative to SEP, on Stantonbury Ecumenical Council 2

Representative on Stantonbury and Willen PCC 1

Representative on Deanery Synod 1

Representative on United Area synod (Methodist and URC) 1

Representatives on the Milton Keynes Mission Partnership Assembly 1

These nominations will be sent to Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP) Secretary and compiled with those of the other 5 churches. The posts will be proposed at the SEP AGM and formally elected only at that meeting on 23rd April 2020.

7. **ELECTIONS for St Mary Magdalene Church, Willen** (See proforma attached for names)

Deputy Church Warden 1

Members of Willen Church Council 10

8. **APPOINTMENT of Volunteers (Sidespeople) at St Mary Magdalene Church, Willen**

Chalice helpers: Margaret, Lynda, Alison, Derek

Collection Counters: Kathryn, Derek, Susan, Hilda, Sharron, Alison, Sharron, Rosemary Mawson, Rosemary LeCount, Wendy, Mike

Setting Up: Lynda, Sharron, Derek, Susan, Rosemary Mawson, Rosemary LeCount

Welcoming: Lynn, Lynda, Sharron, Derek, Susan, Rosemary M, Rosemary L,

Cleaning: Lynda, Pip, Rosemary M, Sharron, Cindy

Flower arranging: Lynda, Rosemary, Pip,

Rota; Kathryn

Intersessions: Lynda, Margaret, Paul, Wendy

Readers: Lynda, Rosemary M, Janet, Derek, Sharron, Norma, Lyn, Rosemary LeCount

9. **REPORTS** (all attached below)

a) Chairman of Church Council

No questions were asked. Mike wanted to minute his thanks to the small number of people that do many of the tasks in church.

b) Minister's report

Paul was asked if cover was in place for his Study Leave during May, June and July later this year. He replied that Wendy was doing most of it.

b) Licensed Lay Minister's report

No questions were raised. Margaret added that the Needlework team, Margaret, Alison, Pip and Laurie, were preparing a piece of work to celebrate the stained glass window portraying the story of Jairus' daughter. This window was removed from Willen and placed in Ely Cathedral. Margaret will lead a service on this during 2020.

She thanked everyone for their hard work in support of the church life.

Paul stated that Margaret is a significant cog in the Willen wheel and he couldn't manage without her. He added that she admirably leads the Pastoral Team, in order to 'look out for each other'.

Rosemary Mawson thanked Margaret for her services on the first week of each month, saying that her preparation was much appreciated and respected.

Margaret and Wendy were both thanked for their work on providing Advent and Lent courses.

c) Treasurer's report

Sean had provided an audited set of accounts. Questions were raised on We have not met the Parish Share for 5 years. There is approximately £6000 available at the moment. Sean was asked about funding access to water and he stated that this was too expensive to keep discussing.

Thanks were given to Sean for his financial reports

d) Deputy Church Warden's report

No questions were asked. David was thanked for all his work on the Lime Avenue Path, electrical repairs and meeting maintenance workers. David said the church has woodworm so the discussion on new carpets in the choir area will need to wait until that is resolved

e) Sides people report.

Lynda reminded people to respond to her appeals for flower funds as there is only £2.34 in the pot at the moment, and cleaning rotas. There were no questions raised. Lynda was thanked for training new volunteers.

f) Rota and membership

ACTION: Sharron to thank Kathryn for her quiet and efficient work behind the scenes on the rota.

Sharron stated there are now 36 members.

10. Any other business

a) Carpet in the choir area

This will be put on hold until the woodworm has been sorted out

b) Heritage Week 11 – 20 September Registration, Trail and volunteers

Mike and Sharron had registered our interest and last week attended a planning meeting. This was well attended by other churches and community groups. The Theme is Nature and Heritage so the trail that Hilda, Wendy and Helen are working on will be useful. Volunteers to 'man' the church at certain times and provide refreshments are needed as well as information on the Robert Hooke and Westminster Abby link. The information for the publicity and brochure needs to be sent to Mel at the Heritage Dept. at Milton Keynes

Council by 31 May 2020, so please let Mike or Sharron know what you can offer during these days.

c)) Living Archive and commercial film nights at Willen Church

Sharron has liaised with this group to begin a monthly Tuesday film night. They have suggested running in April for four weeks of showing films, mainly from the early MK Development Corporation days. The charge is £100 and they bring all equipment, meaning a minimum of 20 people paying a donation of at least £5 on the door, is needed to break even. Tea and coffee would be provided. Paul said films couldn't be shown during the three days of Holy Week, so 7 April would not be used, so it would have to go into May.

ACTION: Sharron to move forward with the arrangements and those who can access forms of publicity would take on that part. This is to help the local community support the funding for the Tower Appeal.

d) Training and Development Plan URC East Midlands Synod Council

This request was passed around those present and was returned empty.

ACTION: Sharron to respond to this body and Alison to bring this up at her next meeting as Representative.

e) Risk Assessments

Lyn Coppendale has offered to do these in the future.

f) Lime Avenue path

David was thanked for the new gravel on this path

g) Title and legal responsibility of Deputy Church Warden or Church Warden

ACTION: the word Deputy will be dropped and we will await the review by Neil Popham to see what the legal responsibilities will be and whether David needs to be sworn in to this role.

h) ERocha next steps on this environment assessment

Hilda stated that the Church Council had agreed to split up roles, but the priorities are obtaining Green utilities and a Green churchyard.

11. Next Annual Members' Meeting: After Morning Worship 15th March 2021

12. The Grace was led by the Minister

The meeting ended at 12.10 p.m.

Sharron T Marland
Secretary
Willen Church Council

Attachments

- a) Membership at AGM 2020
- b) Nominations for Officers
- c) Officers' Reports

a) Membership at AGM 2020 – 36 members

Surname	Christian Name
Armstrong	Derek James
Armstrong	Susan Elizabeth
Bowden	Norma Celia
Brown	Joyce
Buttel	Kathryn
Carey	Wendy Marion
Colley	Elizabeth
Coppendale	Lyn
Coyne	Pip
Eaton	Helen
Figg	John
Halliwell	Elizabeth osemary
Halliwell	Michael
Hawkins	Janet Christine
Icke	David John
Kirkwood	Hilda Rosalind
Le Count	Rosemary
McClay	Julie Ann
McCullough	Norma
McNulty	Gwen
McNulty	Anthony
Magaya	Norah
Marland	Sharron Tulle
Mawson	Rosemary Anne
Meszaros	Maria Simonne
Miles	Sean
Moakes	Margaret
Moakes	Ben
Moakes	Jenny
Noons	Gina
Osei	Calliope Mingle
Osei	Harry
Phillips	Lynda
Preston	David George
Read	Alison Lena
Williams	Cindy

b) Nominations for Officers and Representatives

POSITION	NAME	PROPOSER	SECONDER
Church Warden (Parish wide)	none		
Warden (for Willen)	David Preston	Margaret Moakes	Lynda Phillips
Deanery Synod	Hilda Kirkwood	Mike Halliwell	Rosemary Mawson
PCC	Sean Miles	Rosemary LeCount	Norma Bowden
Church Council	Rosemary Mawson	Lynda Phillips	Susan Armstrong
Church Council	Rosemary LeCount	Rosemary Mawson	Alison Read
Church Council	Pip Coyne	Mike Halliwell	Sharron Marland
Church Council	Sean Miles	Wendy Carey	Sharron Marland
Church Council	Sharron Marland	Mike Halliwell	Sean Miles
Church Council	Lyn Coppendale	Lynda Phillips	Norma Bowden
Church Council	David Preston	Sean Miles	Sharron Marland
Church Council	Mike Halliwell	Margaret Moakes	Rosemary Mawson
Church Council	Gina Noors	Pip Coyne	Norma Bowden
Stantonbury Ecumenical Council	Wendy Carey	Lynda Phillips	Rosemary Mawson
Stantonbury Ecumenical Council	David Preston	Sharron Marland	Rosemary LeCount
MK Mission Partnership Assembly	Wendy Carey	Rosemary Mawson	Alison Read
United Area (Meth)	Alison Read	Wendy Carey	Sharron Marland

c) Officer's Reports

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome and thanks for coming to the Annual General Meeting of St. Mary Magdalene, Willen Church, This is your Opportunity to find out what we do at your Church and if you feel that there are things which need changing or adding now's the time to put your thoughts forward and to vote for or against any proposals which are discussed at this meeting.

Many thanks to the Officers and Church Council members who have worked for the benefit of our Church over the last twelve months and for those who are standing for re-election or to join the Church Council for the coming year.

I would like at this time, from myself and from all members of our Church to thank Paul Smith our Vicar, Margaret Moakes our Licensed Lay Minister, Wendy Carry and all other vicars who come to take the services for us. I think also that we should thank all the many members of our Church who spend lots of time and effort making St. Mary Magdalene Church a friendly, comfortable and welcoming for us all. Please note that the heating is now working well

During the last year amongst other things we held a Summer Fete at Willen pavilion on a nice sunny day and was enjoyed by members of the Church and many locals and we managed to raise a good sum of money for the Church. We also had a very enjoyable Burns evening in January again at the Willen pavilion which also raised money for the Church. Another event organised by members of our Church was an overnight sleep out to raise money for bus shelter for the homeless.

Amongst our Christmas celebrations in church was a carol concert sung by Quorum to a full Church with special guests The Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire and the Lord Mayor of Milton Keynes. Quorum regularly entertain us in Church with their singing.

We are hoping to hold various events during the coming year to raise much needed funds for the tower which is in desperate need of repair.

There will be a Church yard tidy during Lent. Fun on any Saturday morning in March 10 till 12 noon, come along with your gloves and garden tools, drinks and snacks in the Church.

Mike Halliwell

VICAR'S REPORT

Worshipping Life

Over the past year the life of our congregation at Willen has continued to develop. Each year we complete annual returns to our denominational sponsors. Returns to the diocese of Oxford include the usual Sunday attendance (in 2019= 26; in 2018 = 24) and an estimate of the "total worshipping community" (2019 approx. 50; approx. 47). We only had one wedding and there were 11 funerals in church and 6 burials of ashes. Lynda and Brian Phillips and Sharron Marland provide verger support for special occasions. This just gives a brief indication of the overall picture of some aspects of worshipping life in our congregation.

We are privileged to be served by a number of local ministers, both lay and ordained. I'm grateful especially to Rev Wendy Carey for often providing cover when I'm not available, and to Margaret Moakes for her continued commitment to lead worship twice a month. We've also had visits from Rev Canon Chuks Iwuagwu, Maggie Prisk, Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe, Rev Dr Neil Popham, Rev Canon John Robertson and Rev David Lewis.

Care of the Church, Churchyard

Generally, I feel that the care of the fabric and grounds is being taken care of well and increasingly by leading members of the congregation taking responsibility, which I welcome. Earlier in 2019 the Lime avenue trees were pruned. The church heating has been of concern, but hopefully it is on the way to being more efficient and effective. Of major concern is the state of repair of the tower and although progress is slow, there is a Tower Appeal steering group trying to make a start raising funds.

Engaging with the community

We have become a little more outward looking over 2019. We were able to join the Pavilion summer fete again and held social events there which members of the wider community have supported. It was a particular joy to follow Lyn Coppendale's inspiration and support a sponsored sleep-out in aid of the MK Bus Shelter. The current mayor, Cllr Crooks, has supported us and at our annual carols by candlelight. Contact with Willen Primary School has resumed more recently for RE lessons and the occasional visit or assembly.

Challenges and Future Developments

It has been a sadness to many both in the congregation and the local community to see the closure of St Michael's Priory (formerly The Well) during 2019 and we await news of its future use, which we hope will be in line with its previous charitable status.

Responsibility to those who visit or belong to our congregation includes having an effective Safeguarding policy. This includes the need to have a Safeguarding lead in the congregation. We don't have one at present and this is a concern which I am obliged to share with you and a responsibility of us all.

Willen Church is part of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership which is itself part of the wider ecumenical church scene in Milton Keynes. This can be quite a complex structure to grasp and the temptation is to focus only on our own congregation and its life. But we are dependent on wider structures which is why awareness of at least the Stantonbury partnership is a need and is helpful. To this end my ministerial colleagues and lay leaders throughout the "SEP" have tried to build partnership through joint events which include the ministerial pulpit exchange, a parish pilgrimage, prayer morning and the Tree Cathedral service. We have been delighted to welcome Rev Dr Sam Muthuveloe onto the team during 2019 as minister in charge of Cross & Stable, Downs Barn. Sam is self-supporting, so we enjoy his ministry without needing to support it financially.

We intend to continue with building partnership initiatives in 2020. This will be especially important as we look to the development of our local and partnership life through the LEP Review. A major change which should take place in 2020 is the adoption of a new fit-for-purpose constitution for our LEP known as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation.) We are awaiting final details before introducing it with a view to making local adjustments and progressing towards adopting and implementing it. A constitution is necessary both to help us get our structures right as well as to be able to register with the Charity Commissioners once the church exemption ends on 31 March 2021.

My Wider role

During 2019 I took over the role of being Ministerial Team leader from Rev David Lewis. This is normally a 3-year responsibility and involves providing leadership to the team of ministers licensed to the partnership as well as within the structures of the ecumenical council. I have managed to avoid taking this on since my only turn doing it from 2003-6. I also play wider roles in the areas of education (at all three levels); in the Oxford diocese and in interfaith relations. As you may be aware, I will be taking a 3 month study leave from May to July this year to prepare a book for publication on the subject of interreligious marriage. I am grateful to the support of the bishop, ministerial colleagues and the church council and ecumenical councils for this. It is part of a contribution to the wider mission of the Church and

developing an area of theology which is both timely but limited in its breadth. I'm sure you will enjoy the ministry of others, mainly Wendy Carey and Margaret Moakes in my absence!

Rev Dr Paul A. Smith

LICENSED LAY MINISTER'S REPORT, 2019-2020

I am, unusually, going to start this report with a long list of 'thank-yous', This is because – as I get older – I become increasingly aware of the times when others supply the energy that I sometimes lack. So thank you, for all that you do, to the Churchwarden, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Chair of the Church Council and all the Council Members. Thank you to the Vergers, the Organists, the Pastoral Carers, the Social-event Organisers, the Welcomers and those who set up for worship. Thank you to the Interceders, the Readers, the News-sheet Co-ordinator, the Rota Organiser and the Group Leaders. Thank you to the Cleaners, the Flower-arrangers, those who Repair and Care for the Church Fabric, including the Needleworkers, and – last but not least – the Vicar and other Priests and Worship Leaders. I apologise if I have missed anyone who beavers away quietly. It is the quiet, background help that makes all the difference.

I continue with my tasks. I hesitate to mention them in any order of priority, but I guess the most important is leading worship on two Sundays each month. I consider this a privilege and am heartened by the steadiness and enthusiasm of the congregations. All-age Worship on the first Sunday of each month stretches my imagination, but is always a joy. I have started advising those present of the theme for the next month, so that they can bring contributions, and that seems to be working well.

The Pastoral Care team has lost two stalwart members this year, and I am immensely grateful for those who have stepped into the breach. The whole group, past and present, are very faithful to their calling and a huge asset to the church.

I was also delighted with the response to the idea of an Advent discussion group, and we met for five sessions in Advent. I think we all gained much – in different ways – from reading the book *The Meaning is in the Waiting* by Paula Gooder. We were updated on our Old Testament knowledge by learning about Abraham & Sarah and about the thoughts of the prophet Isaiah. We were brought well and truly into the New Testament era by discussing the roles of John the Baptist and of Mary, mother of Jesus. The

book was so rich in material that we decided to take it up again in Lent, perhaps inserting a Lent Quiet time into one of the sessions.

One of the events I attended this year was Bishop Alan's Barbecue for Licensed Lay Ministers at his residence in Great Missenden. That provides an opportunity to talk to Lay Ministers in other parts of the Diocese and realise how important is their role. Those I spoke to were all very sad at the closure of Willen Priory, which they had found a helpful place to visit for quiet and sustenance.

Another event I attended, together with Paul, was a Diocesan Safeguarding Training Day at Diocesan Church House. For me as a Lay Minister and as Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, it is really important to be aware of safeguarding issues. I found the day extremely helpful and learnt – amongst other things – about safe working practices, keeping records, managing risk and caring for victims and survivors. It was all valuable information, and I hope I am now alerted to possible eventualities.

As a small cog in the Willen wheel, I look forward to the next year.

Margaret Moakes

DEPUTY CHURCH WARDEN REPORT

I find the title "Deputy Warden" strange as it was not in use in the 1990's when last I was a member of the Church Council at Willen and I have yet to meet the Warden for whom I might deputise (would this be the one Warden in the Stantonbury Parish?)

Soon after the 2019 Willen Annual Meeting, I was advised by Tim Norwood, the Area Dean, not to actually do anything as I had no legal standing or protection and I was lacking the Bishop's authority as this post did not involve being sworn in.

So, what might a Warden do (either Parish wide or within the Congregation):

- be foremost among the laity in the life and mission of the Church
- co-operate with the Incumbent
- encourage parishioners in the practice of true religion and promote unity and peace among them
- maintain order and decency in the church and churchyard especially during service times

What has this meant in practice in 2019/2020?

- Organising a full inspection of the Church's electrical installation and achieving a certificate valid for the next five years (this included replacing wire fuses with more sensitive trip switches to lower the risk of fatalities or fires from electrical faults)
- Being associated with community events which raise the awareness of the existence of a worshipping congregation (this has included a Saturday community event jointly with a neighbouring parish council at Coffee Hall; the sleep out in support of the homeless bus; the harvest supper, Burns Night and representing the congregation as a Trustee of Willen Pavilion; members of the congregation joining in the nightly soup run for the homeless)
- Testing all firefighting equipment and increasing the level of equipment in place and its visibility
- Meeting a number of times with Neil Popham in his carrying out of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Parish review – with two other members of the congregation, participating in worship at Downs Barn on 3 Sundays in December to gain experience of life elsewhere in the Ecumenical Parish
- Being aware of the 2016 five-yearly report on the Church's fabric and the need for fund raising for repair (it is likely that the 2021 report from an architect will find more issues to address and to fund raise for in ensuing years). Progress on a very small worshipping congregation raising the necessary £100,000 has been slow to date.
- Very recently, discovering active woodworm in the Church – this may be a minor issue – the report is yet to hand
- Heating: at current tariffs, the installed heating could cost £2.80 per hour to operate and usage is currently approaching £100 per week on a year round basis. There is a need to find a balance which keeps the fabric safe and which provides an appropriate background for worship. By their nature, the large clear window areas are draughty and significant projectors of radiant heat out into the locality.

David Preston

Flower Fund 2020

Firstly a big thank you to all who donate to the Church Flower Fund those within our Church and those who contribute who are non Church members, without you we would not be able to have fresh flowers for our special services of Easter, St Mary Magdalene Day and Harvest Festival, the money you give is used for flowers for those services only, all floristry accessories and embellishments such as the fruit and vegetables used in Harvest are paid for privately as are any other displays apart from those mentioned above.

FLOWER FUND 2019-2020

At the start of 2019 we had a carry-over of £50.34

An appeal for Easter Flowers raised	£84.00
Giving a total of	£134.34
Easter flowers cost	£94.00 donation 15.00
Leaving a total of	£55.34
St Mary Magdalene Day cost	£18.00 donations of £20.00
Giving a total of	£57.34
Harvest cost	£55.00
Leaving us with a carry over into 2020 of	£2.34

We retain all receipts should anyone wish to see them.

We will be making a fresh appeal this year.

Thank you to all those who give their time to help decorate our Church for these special occasions, Rosemary Mawson, Cindy Williams, Pip Coyne, Wendy Carrey, Jennie Sergeant, Gwen McNulty and also two of my neighbours Ann-Marie and Marina thank you all for helping me.

Also a big thank you to Susan and Derek Armstrong for the lovely greenery they give us at Easter.

CHURCH CLEANING ROTA.

There has been a new rota on the Church notice board on the right hand side as you leave church since mid January, please consider giving one day a year to help keep the church clean and tidy, if you do it with someone else it will take about an hour if on your own about two, there are brooms and an upright vacuum cleaner in the tower vestry please bring your own dusters.

NO POLISH is allowed so please do not use any.

Those of us on the rota are ageing and I have lost two ladies due to ill health, if a few more of you do not come forward to help we will not be able to keep it up.

It is important that those who visit our beautiful church find it looking loved and cared for, I'm not asking for every week or every month just once a year. Thank you to Cindy Williams, Wendy Carrey, Lyn and David Coppendale for their help this year and thank you to Julie and Sam McClay And Rosemary Mawson who due to ill health have had to retire. Please note that David and Sam are not even members of this church but like my husband Brian who comes to help me at times when needed give their time freely, I thank them for their kindness.

COMMUNION SET UP.

Thank you to all who help with setting up for Sunday services whether a communion or morning worship we rely on your help for the smooth running of these services. Welcome to the team Rosemary Le Count and thank you to Sharron Marland, Susan and Derek Armstrong and Rosemary Mawson.

Before I bring this to a close, I would also like to thank David Preston and his team for the lovely Harvest supper and Burns Night meals, that David has reinstated.

Also, the behind scenes people who do so much unseen for our Church, Tony McNulty, Phil Marland and Brian Phillips.

With Grateful thanks to you all

Lynda Phillips

The Treasurer's Report is attached separately