



## **ST JOHN'S CHURCH HARPENDEN**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners**

**Held on Sunday 12 May 2024 in the  
church hall.**

**Present: 39:** Revd Tim Vickers (Chair). Revd Ritah Namakula (Curate), Heather Nye (Churchwarden), Mary Jean Pritchard (Secretary), Jane Donati, Andrew Ballard, Stuart Burnett, Alison Bygrave, Susan Kerr. Christine Kenyon, Mary Hoare, Alastair Meldrum, Lauryn Awbrey, Derek Curran, Elizabeth Curran, Julia Smith, Carol Cooke, DI Borthwick, Helen Davies, Marjorie Mansfield, Liz Neville, Nick Lockett, Dawn Mason, Gudrun Ledwith, Michael Hughes, Anne Edwards, Sophie Crowley, Elizabeth Gordon-Brown, Warren Greaves, Jim McGown, Bryan Coventry, Elizabeth Coventry, James Hillman, Henrietta Hillman, Liz Macdonald, John Jones, David Nye, Martin Myers, Michael Readman, Tony Woods

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Brenda Cottle, Jenny Cope, Sue Walker, Matt Barter, Liz Sergeant.

#### **2. Minutes of the last meeting**

Adoption of the minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on Sunday 26 March 2023 was proposed by Warren Greaves, seconded by Christine Kenyon and carried unanimously.

#### **3. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **4. Election of churchwardens**

No nominations had been received so no churchwardens were elected.

**The meeting closed at 11.10am**



## **ST JOHN'S CHURCH HARPENDEN**

### **Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 12 May 2024 in the church hall.**

**Present:** There were 39 members present, the same as for the Meeting of Parishioners.

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Same as for the Meeting of Parishioners.

#### **2. Minutes of the last APCM**

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 26 March 2023 was proposed by Heather Nye, seconded by Anne Edwards and carried unanimously.

#### **3. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **4. Trustees' report**

The Trustees' report had been uploaded to the website and available to read in advance of the meeting.

In the absence of a Treasurer, David Nye spoke to the financial statements. On page 10 the accounts showed that expenditure from general funds was more than income; much of the expenditure had been to repair the hall roof, an essential expense for which we had received some money from the Harpenden Trust. The PCC sets aside reserves to meet unexpected expenditure and our policy is to hold reserves equivalent to two months of general running costs; David pointed out that at 31 December this had fallen to 1.1 months and therefore we need to be aware of the need to build up those reserves.

David also explained how the designated funds were set up, referring specifically to the legacy fund, which should be used for expenditure on specific issues and not for day-to-day costs – ie, to pay the bills. He reported that Betty Mitchinson had left the church £20,000. The funds were designated by the PCC and therefore the PCC could change its policy and redesignate the funds.

In answer to a question from Michael Readman, David explained that the Linwood Road property was valued at historic cost rather than current market value.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by John Jones, seconded by Bryan Coventry and passed unanimously.

Heather explained that since Jon Pitman had stepped back from the treasurer role because of work and family commitments, a number of people had stepped up to fill the gap and she paid particular thanks to David for all he had done.

### **5. Appointment of independent examiner**

Miller & Co would be asked to be our independent examiner for the coming year. This was proposed by David, seconded by Alison and passed unanimously.

### **6. Safeguarding report**

The safeguarding report had been uploaded to the website and available to read in advance of the meeting.

Thanks were recorded to Jane Donati, who had carried out the role of safeguarding officer for nine years, and to Liz Macdonald who had stepped up to take on the role.

### **7. Electoral roll report**

The electoral roll report had been uploaded to the website and available to read in advance of the meeting. The new roll has 175 entries, a net reduction of 7 since last year.

Neil Middleton was thanked for all his work as electoral roll officer and also for everything he does to maintain the website, send out the newsletter, etc.

Approval of the report was proposed by Martin Myers, seconded by Di Borthwick and passed unanimously.

### **8. Deanery Synod report**

David Nye, one of our Deanery Synod representatives, had prepared a report that had been uploaded to the website and available to read in advance of the meeting. There were no questions on this.

## **9. Churchwarden's report**

The churchwarden's report had been uploaded to the website and available to read in advance of the meeting. There were no questions on this.

## **10. Project Phoenix update**

Carol Cooke, a member of the Project Phoenix Steering Committee, gave an update on the project. She started by emphasising that this would not be a fundraising plea, but an update of where things were with the project. She said that the steering group was a committed and hardworking group, which had a plan to bring the project to fruition. However, this couldn't happen without the support of the congregation. A number of ambassadors had been appointed, who would be going to speak to everyone about the project and how they could help. She thanked everyone for their support to date and concluded by saying she was confident there would be a new building in five years' time.

## **11. Election of representatives to the Parochial Church Council and Deanery Synod**

Four members of PCC had come to the end of their term of office: Heather Nye, Martin Myers, Bryan Coventry and Nick Lockett. There will be a proposal at PCC to co-opt Nick Lockett for one further year as he is currently a member of Standing Committee and with no churchwardens for the coming year it would be beneficial to keep him on. The other members were thanked for their contributions.

Nominations to serve had been received from:

Stuart Burnett	Proposed by: Mary Jean Pritchard Seconded by: Heather Nye
Mary Hoare	Proposed by: Mary Jean Pritchard Seconded by: Heather Nye
Christine Kenyon	Proposed by Mary Jean Pritchard Seconded by Keeley Bates

In addition, Mary Jean Pritchard, currently co-opted to the PCC, had been proposed by Heather Nye and seconded by Helen Davies.

These nominations were presented en bloc, proposed by Heather Nye, seconded by Susan Kerr and passed unanimously.

John Jones asked if there were further vacancies on PCC and Mary Jean replied that the number of places available related to the number on the electoral roll, which meant we could have 12 members of laity and currently have 8, so further nominations would be welcome.

Mary Jean also pointed out that under church rules the annual meeting decides whether one or more of the Readers licensed to the parish, whose names are on the electoral roll, should be members of the PCC. David Nye and Lauryn Awbrey are currently ex-officio members by virtue of their membership of the Deanery Synod, but as Anne Edwards was no longer on Deanery Synod she would need to be approved as a member of PCC. This was proposed by Tim, seconded by James Hillman and passed unanimously.

Alison Bygrave was happy to be elected as a Deanery Synod representative. She was proposed by Heather Nye, seconded by Stuart Burnett and passed unanimously.

## **12. Vicar's report**

Tim began by acknowledging those who had left the church during 2023: Roger Carter and Anna Chambers and those who had arrived: Ritah Namakula and Amanda Knights. First and foremost, our purpose is to worship God and make him known in the community, so Tim is particularly grateful to those who share in the ministry of the church, the wonderful team of reader: to Lauryn, who brings her American energy to everything, her preaching, leading of Faith and Light and saying the things that everyone else is thinking! David's sure and steady hand, informative preaching and pastoral care is invaluable; Anne's sensitive and listening presence has provided Tim with a great deal of spiritual support.

Tim paid tribute to our team of servers, thanking Michael, who had been Head Server for nearly 25 years.

Heather had been a sole warden for the year, and Tim was particularly grateful for the support she had given him personally and for the calm and professional way she had carried out her duties; she had served the parish with great care. Tim presented Heather with gifts, and this was greeted with applause. Heather had been supported by Martin, who contributed so much, often unseen, by Jane, who had supported the team on Sunday mornings in addition to her parish safeguarding role, and by Bryan who also supported on Sundays and whose listening ear made him a valuable member of the team. We need to recruit more people to help out on Sunday mornings as duty wardens.

Tim also thanked Mary Jean for her work as PCC secretary, particularly in relation to the APCM. He acknowledged Jon Pitman's contribution as treasurer, Alison for work as parish giving officer, and David for holding everything on finances together. He thanked all members of the PCC – those stepping down, continuing to serve and newly appointed.

He mentioned Matt Barter, Liz Sergeant and the team working on the new parish centre; this is not an easy climate for a capital project, and we all have to get behind it if we are to be able to replace the parish hall.

Volunteers who contribute their time in many different ways are greatly appreciated, He highlighted a few people who deserve particular recognition: Christine Kenyon for her work with Little Acorns and the toddler service and Elizabeth Curran, who has led the Flower Guild for many years.

We are a flourishing church, growing and changing as we figure out what God wants us to be. Tim offered a reflection on the start of Chapter 12 in the Book of Hebrews:

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.*

There have been struggles in the past year, but we have been putting down roots, persevering with the challenges and surrounded by the saints, who show us the way.

### **13. Review of 2023**

A slideshow of statistics and photographs, which had been put together by Martin, was shared at the meeting and will be posted on the website.

### **14. Any other business**

John Jones asked whether it would be possible for the Remembrance Sunday service to start earlier, to allow those who wished to attend the parade in town to get there. Tim pointed out that it had been earlier last year, but he would look at this again.

John also asked whether we could purchase more of the small hymn books. This could be actioned.

Lauryn then thanked Tim for all he does and for his report and said we look forward to flourishing together.

**The meeting finished at 11.50pm.**