

Minutes of the Annual Meetings of Christ Church Eaton, in the church on Sunday 18 May 2025

Opening Prayer and Welcome

The meeting began with a prayer at 11:30am. Patrick Richmond (PR), Vicar, welcomed the people present and introduced the meetings.

A. The Meeting of Parishioners

1. Election of Wardens:

Colin McLean was willing to stand again as Church Warden and Simon Girling was nominated by Ruth Vaughan and they were both elected unopposed to unanimous applause.

B. Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

1. Apologies were received from:

Ros Wright, Richard Middleton, Robin Quine, Rachel and David Taylor, Alistair Bolt, Chris Mitchell, Lucy Grubb, Audrey Joliffe, and Gerald Cooke.

There were 54 attendees.

Patrick reminded the congregation that only those on the Electoral Roll can formally attend the meeting and vote, but those not on the Roll were welcome to stay but not vote.

2. Minutes of the 2024 Meeting:

The Minutes of the APCM held on Sunday 19 May 2024 were **unanimously approved** and Ian Parkes was thanked for preparing them.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

PR mentioned the following matters arising from the Minutes on the agenda:

- With regard to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) we had invited people to fill out a separate form alongside the Electoral Roll form giving permission for them to be contacted by the church on other matters if they so wished. The Parishes Office can help contact people using this information.
- The wardens have identified about six silver items owned by CCE that are not used on a regular basis and will offer them to the Cathedral for them to keep on our behalf if they are willing to do so.
- PR asked if we still supported the use of the strapline with the church logo, *Here for Christ – Here for you* and it was **unanimously agreed**
- The inclusion of Prayers for Growth in all services was **unanimously agreed**
- The continuation of the Children's and Youth activities and Sunday school were **unanimously agreed**. Vivien Humber expressed her thanks to the congregation for supporting the Children's and Youth activities and Sunday school and their prayers for these activities and asked for this to continue in all worship. This was applauded.
- PR asked if we should continue to pray for a technological breakthrough in combatting climate change and to pray for the work on Safeguarding led by Caroline Gibbs. These were **unanimously agreed**
- PR gave thanks to Alistair Bolt for his work on pursuing the Eco-Church Gold award which will involve calculating the carbon footprint of the church building.
- PR asked if we should continue to have periods of silence during services and prayers afterwards which was **unanimously agreed**
- PR commended John Ladd's work publicity despite being unwell and Ros Wright's use of Facebook. These activities were **Unanimously agreed**
- PR advised that we were still putting the heating on in Church on Mondays for the Chat over a Cuppa group and to provide a warm space despite not getting another Norfolk Community Foundation grant. He said that 45 people attended last Monday marking VE Day. It was reported that more people were now coming to Chat over a Cuppa, usually about 20 and comprising a mixture of sexes and ages. The congregation **Unanimously supported** this activity.

- PR mentioned offering hospitality to students and single people. Jane Darnton had played a leading role by offering Sunday lunches but noted we have no students at present. The congregation **Unanimously supported** offering hospitality.
- PR expressed gratitude to Geraldine Verschoor and her team for the Chosen group activities. The congregation **Unanimously supported** this activity.
- Bridget Archer mentioned the Talk@2 series. This is the second summer of these Friday afternoon activities and 20 people turned up last week. She said Jacky Sutcliffe had been distributing leaflets and urged our own congregation to attend these as well. PR said he would mention them to colleagues in the Deanery. Geraldine Verschoor urged us to attend too, bring a friend and be invitational.

4. Vicar's Report and PCC Secretary's Report:

Patrick proposed that the Vicar's Report and the Secretary's Report (included in the Annual Report) should be assumed to be read and asked if there were any questions. There were none but Matthew Wright thanked the PCC for agreeing to his forthcoming Sabbatical. The reports were both **unanimously agreed**. PR thanked all those who had prepared reports for this meeting the those present applauded.

5. Report on the Revised Electoral Roll:

PR prefaced David Archer's Electoral Roll report by saying that the Roll had to be prepared from scratch this year rather than rolling forwards last years with additions and deletions. David summarised his electoral roll report and said that a complete renewal is required every six years and the Roll is the closest thing we have to a membership list. He had reminded people in person to fill out the form to join the Roll and followed this up by emails. The process started in March, ended on 3 May and we now have 130 on the Roll and the contact details and consents of those who had also completed a GDPR form. Last year we had 158 on the Roll but some are in care homes, have died, moved away from the area or do not consider they attend enough services any more to be on the Roll. Thanks were given to David Archer for his work on maintaining the Electoral Roll and his report was **unanimously agreed** and applauded.

Geraldine Verschoor mentioned *worshipping community statistics* which are different from the Electoral Roll. PR said they essentially comprise his estimate of people who attend at least once a month or would if not prevented by illness, and that the age range breakdown for these figures is also his estimate based on a questionnaire taken some years ago.

6. Presentation and Approval of Accounts for 2024:

Tony Grubb noted that hardcopies of the Annual Accounts for the calendar year 2024 were available in the back of the church. He said that the accounts are broadly similar to the previous year. Overall income in 2024 increased slightly by £500 compared to 2023 and is within the statistical norm for annual income. The 2024 expenditures were up by about £13k over the previous year, largely attributable to Church and Kinchen Hall renovations and an increase in the Parish Share to the Diocese. The Kinchen Hall renovations at £18.7k were slightly higher than the letting income of £16.2k but the PCC is examining ways to increase income from Church assets. Regarding available free reserves, the accounts show unrestricted reserves of £72,757 which includes designated funds from the Cottage and Kinchen Hall income. Going forward, the PCC will consider maintaining a fixed amount or percentage for these designated funds for clarity and transferring the remainder to a General Reserve Fund. Overall, the accounts are in good order.

PR invited questions from the congregation.

- Roger Glenwright asked if it was worth retaining Kinchen Hall and the Cottage as they were expensive to maintain in both time and cost.
- TG responded that they were a very good regular income stream for Christchurch and that if we sold them the capital sum would soon diminish to nothing.
- TG said that he thinks that ideally, we should consider renovation work to the Hall to potentially generate a higher income stream

- PR pointed out that this year's expenditure on the Hall and Cottage was exceptional and that the rent for both the Hall and Cottage had been increased so we will have a greater income in 2025
- Charles Bartram asked where Kinchen Hall was and what we used it for. PR explained its location on Colman Road and said that we have an agreement with the Beehives Childcare group who run a nursery and after school clubs there.

TG proposed the Annual Accounts for the calendar year 2024, PR seconded them, and they were **unanimously agreed** with applause for Tony Grubb.

7. Report on the Financial Affairs of the Parish

Tony mentioned that Christ Church is enrolled in the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), administered by the Diocese, that replaces the locally administered Planned Giving Scheme. We are continuing the transition of planned givers to the PGS. The scheme benefits Christ Church by assuming the administrative burden and handling of planned donations and Gift Aid payments. The main beneficiary of this scheme is our church and through your generous commitment, we can be assured of a regular, tax-efficient source of income which has the capacity and option to increase with the cost of living yet involves virtually no administration. Your gifts are passed back to our parish by the 10th of each month and Gift Aid is usually received at the same time from the PGS coinciding with receipt from HMRC and has saved significant manual effort in processing Gift Aid donations. Just over half of regular givers are signed up to the PGS. We would be most grateful if everyone can complete the switch to the PGS during 2025.

With regard to the Quinquennial Inspections and the required works to the church fabric, David Scott mentioned that the Friends of Christchurch Eaton (FoCCE) raise money annually through events they organise and that there had been a large anonymous donation for the Category C works. Further Quinquennial works remain.

PR proposed thanks to the anonymous donor and invited applause. He also invited applause for those who give regularly to the church and a further round of applause to the FoCCE.

8. Church Wardens' Report including the Fabric Report for the Church, Kinchen Hall and the Cottage:

All these reports are in the Annual Report which had been circulated in advance and taken as read. There was applause for the Colin McLean, Ruth Vaughan as she retires and Simon Girling for taking up the post of Warden. The reports were **agreed unanimously**.

9. Presentation of the Church's Terrier and Inventory:

Colin McLean explained that the Terrier and Inventory is a list of all moveable items in the Church, including the Sunday school equipment, and held up a copy. He also said that he had taken photographs of the silver items that we intend to offer to the Cathedral to accompany the Terrier.

10. Retirements and presentation of tokens of thanks:

A presentation was made to Ruth Vaughan to mark her retirement as Church Warden with applause from all those present. She thanked us and said she would like to take this opportunity to clarify that she was not retiring due to ill health but that she simply doesn't have time in her life now with other things that she needs to prioritise. She expressed her gratitude to Simon Girling for offering to stand as Warden in her place, which received further applause.

PR also expressed thanks to Caroline Gibbs who has been organising the summer event for ten years now and who is stepping back from this role after this year's Summer Fair on 14 June. She was applauded.

PR also thanked Chris Mitchell for all the work he had done in relation to looking after the fabric of the Church, Kinchen Hall and the Cottage. He lamented that we had been unable to

thank his predecessor Mike Brookes who had passed away in post, but was confident his reward would be great in heaven.

PR advised that we will make a presentation to Ros in June, before she is ordained deacon on the 29 June. She was currently on a residential study course.

11. Elections and Appointments:

a) Election of members to the Deanery Synod:

There were no vacancies at this time.

b) Election of members to the PCC:

No one was up for re-election and no new people had put themselves forward to join at this time.

1. Alistair Bolt had been serving ex officio on the PCC as a Licensed Lay Minister (LLM) but according to new C of E rules this status now requires annual approval at the APCM. His election was **unanimously agreed**.

c) Group Council:

There is a space for one more member of Group Council. Leisa Devlin had put herself forward for this role and was **elected** unopposed with unanimous applause

d) Appointment of Sides People

Alistair MacDougall was thanked for his role in arranging the Sidespersons and read out a list of those who were willing to stand. These are:

Jeff Arden, Rowena Atkinson, Hugh Back, Charles Bartram, Anthony Colman, Gerald Cooke, Thelma Cooke, Leisa Devlin, David Edmonds, John Elbro, Anne Girling, Roger Glenwright, Toby Harris, Vivien Humber, Catherine Jeffries, Alistair MacDougall, Andrea Middleton, Richard Middleton, Chris Mitchell, Sue Mitchell, Ian Parkes, Robin Quine, David Scott, Jacky Sutcliffe, Ruth Vaughan, Anne Watkins, David Watkins, Garry Wheatley, and Joan Wheatley.

They were all commended to the PCC with unanimous applause and the list would be approved at the next PCC meeting.

e) Election of Independent Examiner:

Tony Grubb recommended that we should appoint Shelly Clark from the same accountants as this year, Waveney Accountants Limited, to be the examiner for the 2025 accounts.

Patrick proposed this to those present at the meeting and it was **agreed unanimously**.

12. AOB:

There was none.

13. Closing Prayers and the Grace

The meeting closed at 12.30pm.

Signed
Chair

Date