

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST CHURCH, CARTERTON

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING – 12.00 pm on SUNDAY, 18 MAY 2025

Attendance: Linda Arter, Ian Baker, Lyndsay Baker, Margo Brewer, Alison Brown, Jenny Clack, Hannah Cloete, Linda Cox, Michael Cox, Glyn Edwards, Marygrace Fanshawe, Alison Ford, Ray Goodson, Carol Hadgraft, Rev Barry Hanson (chair), Ian Harley, Allister Holt, Karen Holt, Brian Hosgood, Sarah Hosgood, Kath Monkhouse, Adrian Norgrove, Zena Pearson, Janet Sayer, Wendy Smith, Jo Sutherland, Jacky Thomas, Doreen Trezise, John Wallcraft, Liz Wood, Eileen Woodland, Linda Wooloff (Secretary)

Apologies: Lynda Bostock, Stephen Bostock, Miriam Knight, Mike Watts

The meeting was chaired by Rev Barry Hanson, Rector of the Benefice of Brize Norton with Carterton and Black Bourton and Chairman of the Parochial Church Council.

Introduction

Barry welcomed the attendees to the meeting and commended the Annual Report and Accounts. These had been published in the building, on the website, and had been circulated to those church members who had elected to receive email communications, so there had been a good opportunity for everyone to review the contents. It was therefore not intended to go through individual reports in detail at this meeting. He was disappointed to see that the membership on the Electoral Roll had gone down, despite it being registered within the Diocese that church attendance is increasing. He mentioned the close relationship that is taking place with the Padres at RAF Brize Norton especially through recent large funeral services which we have been able to accommodate on their behalf. He noted that our partnership with the Kintsugi Hope charity had now been terminated following the stepping down of Louise Griffiths and the departure of Billie Tweedy.

Barry thanked the many volunteers who had contributed to the life of our church during the past year which had presented some challenges.

No questions were raised at this point about any individual report.

Electoral Roll

At the start of the year, the Electoral Roll stood at 69 members. This year marked the time for a complete refresh of the Electoral Roll, which happens every six years. As a result, 29 people who had been on the previous Roll had not returned a new form. However, we were pleased to welcome 14 new members. The Roll membership at the time of its close stood at 56. It has now reopened and Barry encouraged people to sign up. (Three new members had already completed forms and would be added.)

Finance Report (Ray Goodson, Treasurer)

Ray took the meeting through the detail of the financial performance of the church in the year January to December 2024 as set out in the Annual Accounts. He reminded the meeting that church finances are subject to the accounting rules of the Charities Act. An annual report must be prepared by the Trustees (the Parochial Church Council (PCC) which includes a section on the financial activities of the parish. The Accounts had been independently examined by Shilton Accounting Services and had been formally approved by the PCC.

Voluntary Giving once again provided the foundation of regular income (£30,366 plus £10,441 from legacy dividends). There had however been a 13% drop in income from Standing Orders, and 8%

from the Parish Giving Scheme vs 2023. Overall, taking account of other revenue streams, our total income at the end of the year showed a slight increase to £81,803 (vs £81,251 in 2023).

However, church expenses (which include clergy and staff expenses, salaries and Parish Share) rose overall by £6k to £125,422 (vs £118,204 in 2023). Clergy expenses reduced but salaries increased due in part to the employment of our Associate Priest. Although it appears as an outgoing expense in the accounts, Mission Giving is a positive charitable action by the church. The PCC was still able to donate £200 per month to Christians Against Poverty (CAP), £50 per month to Gatehouse Oxford and when the need arises makes 'Hardship' funds available to, usually families, who are in desperate need. We also helped Brize Norton meet their parish share with a donation of £1,391. (This latter donation helps our Benefice meet its overall Share commitment and entitled us to a discount for full payment.)

General running expenses rose by just over £4.4k but the utility bills again showed a large increase from £9,920 to £12,263. Both the Gas & Electric supply contracts ran out in 2023 and because the previous contracts had been fixed price pegged to the prices of two years the renewal prices have caused the overall jump in cost of the utility bills. Both the cost per unit of the fuel and the Daily charge have increased.

Total outgoings for the year amounted to £163,828 (vs £143,982 in 2023) which meant that our deficit vs income became larger pro rate at minus £82,024. Through cash injections from the sale of some of our investment shares during the year amounting to £60,000, the main bank balance was kept in the black.

The value of our investments with CCLA (two share and one deposit account) have continued to be the "God send" for our finances from the Keen brothers' legacy. CCLA have continued to perform well as our investment agency. Although our net assets decreased over the year by \$66k, we are still financially sound.

Ray thanked the valuable contribution made by both Jacky Thomas who had supported him as Administrative Assistant (Finance) and Alison Ford, who continued to act as our Gift-Aid Reclaim officer. He also thanked Shilton Accounting Services for their support, especially in handling the payroll administration.

Barry thanked Ray for his diligence and hard work throughout the year despite personal health challenges and looked forward to working with him in the coming year. He noted that ministry salary expenses would be reduced by £4k per month. However, with the plans to recruit a Team Vicar shortly, a decision would need to be made by the PCC about whether to increase the standard 3.5 days per week term of employment dictated by the Diocese for this role by financing a further day in the hope of attracting candidates.

Appointment of an Independent Examiner

The meeting unanimously approved the appointment of Shilton Accounting Services as Independent Examiner for the 2025 Annual Accounts.

Youth & Community Ministry (Wend Smith)

2024 had been a challenging year but a programme of school assembly attendance to build relationship had been maintained by Barry and Wend. The numbers attending the Informal Sunday services were growing and Kids' Club numbers remained constant. The new Tea and Toast (TNT) had proved popular for secondary school aged children with regular attendance from both Carterton Community College and Burford School. These include children who have no other engagement with church activities. Friday Drop In remains a popular term-time event.

Messy Church was currently suspended while the team reviewed making changes to the offering.

It had been possible to hold two Holiday Clubs at Easter and in August. Twenty-three attended in Easter 2025 and there are already 15 bookings for this coming August. Wend thanked the volunteers who had made these event possible and asked for anyone wishing to join the team to speak with her.

Various events took place over the Christmas period both at St John's and also at the other churches in the Benefice which were well-received.

Plans were in place in 2025 to launch Church Minecraft at the end of May. Fund-raising by the youth had raised enough for a group to attend Amplify Adventure in July. If this goes well, we would hope to repeat it again next year.

Jacky Thomas asked for a vote of thanks for all the hard work that Wend had put into this Ministry during 2024 in particular. She had worked tirelessly to ensure all events were well planned and prepared in advance for the volunteers involved.

Fabric Report

General maintenance and compliance safety checks had been carried out during the year. Mindful of the financial situation, projects had been identified for future-proofing the building such as replacing the windows and foyer glazing, but these would be put on hold until money was available. One project which had been completed was the replacement of the inefficient radiant heaters in the hall.

One area that would need addressing in the immediate future was the replacement of a recently failed gas boiler. The Diocesan objective of zero carbon replacement would be unlikely to sanction the boiler replaced with a like-to-like equivalent. Mike was currently investigating the cost and possibility of installing an air source heat pump. This equipment was unfortunately two to three times more expensive than a gas boiler.

The Eco garden was an ongoing project and thanks went to Jacky Thomas for supervising this.

Barry thanked Ian Harley, Stephen Hester and John Wallcraft for their support running the technical side of services.

Jacky Thomas was thanked for her role in taking over leadership of the Pastoral Care team with support from Lyndsay Baker.

Election of Officers

Wend Smith, Liz Wood and Linda Wooloff had completed their respective terms as members of the Parochial Church Council. All had decided to stand again for re-election and were UNANIMOUSLY elected by the meeting.

The appointment of officers for leadership roles and committee members would be made at the first meeting of the new Parochial Church Council immediately following this meeting.

Safeguarding

Barry had been very pleased to recruit Kath Monkhouse as our Safeguarding Officer. Since taking up her role in January, she was already working hard to ensure training was completed and our policy met with Church of England standards.

GDPR & IT

Mike Watts had continued in the role of GDPR Data Compliance Officer during 2024.

He had also been instrumental in developing a Benefice website with the other two churches. ChurchSuite had been rolled out.

Barry hoped to look at ways to increase our presence on social media and improve our websites over the coming months.

There being no further issues to discuss and no questions raised, Barry closed the meeting at 12.45pm.

Presentation slides used during this meeting are available on the website, along with copies of the Annual Report and Financial Statements.