



Swindon Old Town Partnership of Churches
Anglican - URC - Methodist Est. 1969

CHRIST CHURCH WITH ST. MARY'S PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Registered Charity Number: 1134032

Christ Church with St Mary's, Swindon
Annual Parochial Church Meeting - Sunday 17th April 2016

Minutes

The meeting opened at 11.30 am.

160417A.1 Opening prayer and worship.

Simon quoted from the introductory letter by the HM the Queen, published in "The Servant Queen and the King she serves" a book from the Bible Society celebrating her birthday: "In my first Christmas Broadcast in 1952, I asked the people of the Commonwealth and Empire to pray for me as I prepared to dedicate myself to their service at my Coronation. I have been – and remain – very grateful to you for your prayers and to God for His steadfast love. I have indeed seen His faithfulness."

The church too has seen remarkable changes – declining numbers of worshippers in the pews, an increase in the number of people who would describe themselves as having no religion, social change that has challenged the principles of living a 'good life' that have hitherto been accepted by Christians. The list could go on.

Christ Church and its congregation need to rise to the challenge of Mission and find ways of connecting the community with Christ. We must put the Church at the heart of the community, have Christ at the heart of everything we do and in so doing, win people's hearts to the knowledge and love of God.

Our Bible verse for 2016: "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, His mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning, great is your faithfulness." Lamentations 3.22 & 23

160417A.2 Attendance & Apologies.

Ailsa Palmer was thanked for the work she has done in preparing for the smooth-running of the APCM.

We received apologies from Anne Macmillan, Christine Senior and Ann and David Sharpe. 43 people signed the attendance register. This is attached to the file copy of the minutes.

Annual Vestry Meeting

160417A.3 To elect two churchwardens.

Daniel Pitt and Michael Ranstead were nominated. Simon then led us in prayer that they should know God's love and encouragement for them in their year ahead as churchwardens. We prayed for their families and for their vocation and for their spiritual growth in the coming year

RESOLVED: 160417A.3R This congregation elects the two persons named below to serve as Churchwardens.

All assented.

Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Daniel Pitt	Audrey Hewer	Pam Bridgeman
Michael Ranstead	Caroline Pitt	Ailsa Palmer

Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

160417A.4 To approve the minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

Resolution proposed by Margaret Williams and seconded by Steve Dumba
All assented but for one abstention.

RESOLVED: 160417A.4R This congregation approves the minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2015.

160417A.5 Matters arising from the minutes of the 2015 APCM not on the agenda - none.

160417A.6 To approve the report of the Electoral Roll Officer.

We thanked Cynthia Desmond, who has acted as our Electoral Roll Officer for several years and stood down during 2015 /16 for her hard work and commitment. Our acting Electoral Roll Officer, Ailsa Palmer reported that the roll stands at 282 members (2014: 284). There are 20 new names this year. 22 people have either died or moved away since the last revision. Gareth and Laura Hutchinson and their family have moved to Bristol, where Gareth is training for ordination at Trinity College.

Resolution proposed by Carol Simmons and seconded by Jo Henry.
All assented.

RESOLVED: 160417A.6R This congregation approves the report of the electoral roll officer.

160417A.7 To notify items of other business, not covered by the agenda – none.

160417A.8 To elect:

(a) New Members of the PCC.

Vacancies arise because members of the PCC have stepped down, either because they have reached the end of their term of service or for personal reasons. This year, we will lose Mel Clark, Lynda Fisher, Elaine Guilding and David Morse. All members were warmly thanked for their loyal service and hard work.

RESOLVED 160417A.8R1 This congregation elects those named below to serve as Members of the PCC.

All assented.

Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Graham Kemp	Caroline Pitt	Nicola Stevenette

Martin Lee was elected in 2015 and it was originally agreed that he would serve for one year only. He has since agreed to continue to serve and the congregation unanimously affirmed him as a member. We are grateful that we shall continue to benefit from Martin's wisdom and spirituality.

The congregation affirmed the co-option of David Howell to the PCC. David is well known to us as an occasional preacher and for his work for the Children and Young People team.

He is currently engaged in a series of consultative meetings with members of the congregation entitled 'Paradigm Shift', the focus of which is growing the membership of the Church, especially in provision for families with children. Messy Church has been able to provide for families with very young children, but we also need to give opportunities for these families, as they grow out of Messy Church, and for newcomers too, to develop spiritually.

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(b) Members of the Deanery Synod.

Members of Deanery Synod also serve on the PCC as ex-officio voting members. The resignation of Melanie Clark meant that there is a vacancy to be filled.

RESOLVED: 160417A.8R2 This congregation elects those named below as Deanery Synod member:

All assented.

Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Sheila Wright	Margaret Williams	Ailsa Palmer

Sarah Bowden, Vijay Patole and Nitin Shinde were elected in 2014 and continue to serve. Thanks to Mel and all our continuing members of Synod for their hard work and contributions to both the PCC and the Synod.

The 2015/16 PCC now consists of:

Ex-officio voting members: Revd. Simon Stevenette, Margaret Williams, Norma McKemey, Anne Macmillan, Daniel Pitt, Michael Ranstead, Sarah Bowden, Vijay Patole, Nintin Shinde, Sheila Wright, Peter Ford (Hon. Sec.) and Keith Tredget (Hon. Treasurer).

Ex-officio but non-voting members: Ailsa Palmer (Parish Administrator until May 27th 2016), Helen Parker-Drabble (Parish Administrator after May 27th 2016), Chris Smith (CCDM)

Co-opted Member: Revd. David Howell.

Elected members, serving until APCM 2017: David Ratnam, Margaret Williams; until APCM 2018: Jim D'Avila, Brian Harris, Martin Lee, Anna Tuersley; until APCM 2019: Graham Kemp.

We prayed for the PCC, mindful of the challenges of being a trustee and the need to work together as a professional team with a spiritual approach, whether as a member of Deanery Synod or as a PCC member. We asked that the congregation support the PCC in their work. We prayed for God's grace, through His Holy Spirit, in our speaking and listening that we might make effective and just decisions.

160417A.9 To appoint:

(a) Sides-people.

Those people listed below have volunteered to continue as sides-people and were affirmed the by a show of hands:

Anne and David Sharpe, Jennie Loveday and Richard Leach, Pam Bridgeman, Roger and Maria Morcumb, Christine Senior, the Shinde and Patole families, Sheila Wright, James D'Avila, Elise Simmons, Margaret Harber, Jo Henry, Marjorie Wilson, Angela Wirdnam and Cynthia Desmond.

The importance of the role of sides-person as a member of the church community is underlined, especially in the welcome given to the congregation and visitors at our services.

The volunteers are thanked for their faithfulness in the past year. As always, the more people who come forward to serve the easier the task will be for those who are already sides-people. It is an ideal opportunity for those wishing to do so to become more involved in church life.

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(b) The auditors for 2016 /17.

Proposed by Graham Kemp and seconded by Melanie Clark.

All assented but for one abstention.

RESOLVED: 160417A.9R This congregation approves the appointment of Monahan's as auditors for 2016 /17.

160417A.10 To receive and approve the Annual Report and Accounts for 2015

Graham Kemp, our new PCC member works at Nationwide BS. He spoke to us briefly on 'good governance'. He said the importance of governance is that while it is about compliance and risk, it is to enable us and to give us the space and the confidence on what we are doing to do the 'right thing' and to work for and to worship God in that way. Basically it should not be restrictive but provide us with the structures that help us achieve our aims, not hinder us.

The Annual Report had been distributed beforehand. We are grateful to Keith Tredget for his clear explanation of the accounts. Keith had taken on the duties of Treasurer under very difficult circumstances and in a short time has mastered a complex brief. Christ Church owes Keith a deep debt of gratitude for the hard work that he has done and continues to do.

We also expressed our gratitude to Mike Palmer, Stephen Grosvenor, Lynda Fisher, Chris Smith (CCDM) and the many others who give sound practical advice and work hard to make our church viable as a growing worshipping community on a secure financial footing.

Treasurer's Report.

This year there is a comprehensive explanation of the accounts with the Annual Report to which readers should refer. Keith explained the salient points to those present.

- The main message for 2016/17 is again a generally positive one. We have investments behind us, the Community Centre is bringing in money but we can't be too complacent.

The Secretary has added an appendix to these minutes containing information that he has extracted from the accounts and the 2016 budget for the convenience of readers. However, this is not a substitute for reading the full report.

Resolution proposed by Mike Ranstead and seconded by Margaret Williams.

All assented.

RESOLVED: 160417A.10 R This congregation approves the Annual Report and Accounts for 2015. Questions and comments arising from Keith's report are included in item 12 below.

160417AP.11 Vicar's Report.

Christian faith is having a difficult time throughout Europe, and the TV film: 'The battle for Christianity' shows how the church is trying to respond to the challenges we face As we look at the World we must not forget we are called to keep the Church small and God's Kingdom large. Countless people have lost their lives crossing the ocean, fleeing from the Syrian civil war. In this country there is the potentially divisive referendum on whether or not we should remain in the European Union.

Archbishop Justin has set us an example when he said "my identity is in Christ" in response to the discovery that his birth-father was not the husband of his mother.

Financially, the church has to liquefy assets in order to have the finances needed to continue its work of preaching the Gospel and maintaining the clergy. 40% of stipendiary clergy will retire by 2020 and we need to find new, younger vocations take up this ministry. There are magnificent self-supporting clergy, two of whom, Daphne and Norma, are in the room with us today, who serve the church.

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We have eight years to turn this around. We need to trust in God but we do need to think radically differently. No change is not an option. Simon gave an example of his weight loss of 20 kg through the support and fellowship of football fans in training. This has enabled him to move more quickly and given him the feeling of having more energy. In the same way, the Church will need to travel light to respond flexibly and rapidly to the challenges it faces.

The Queen gives an example of faithfulness and trust when managing change. A key aim for the year was the appointment of a new Parish Administrator. We will be sad when Ailsa retires, but it provides an example of how, sometimes, things come to an end or change in order that new things can arise. Helen will bring new gifts and new talents to the role. It is really important that we grasp that whatever we do in church, whether it is mission and evangelism, administration, health and safety or any other of the many roles, everybody serves. Everything we do can be given as a spiritual gift. Everything we do can show that we care: every visit, every e-mail and every phone call. We are blessed that there is a particularly able community of people here in Christ Church.

Norma McKemey spoke about 'Sunday@4' – a new service exploring a different spirituality and all types of worship. They are currently working through the Gospel of Luke. The congregation originally met at St. Mary's, but they now meet in CC @ CC. The total congregation is about 35 people, if everyone comes.

Please pray for all who come to Christ Church whether to light a candle or for other reasons. Let there be an explosion of 'welcoming' around us. Help each of us to serve,

Helen Parker-Drabble's presentation - How does administration fit into the life of the church?

Helen was delighted to introduce herself self as our new administrator. She lives at the bottom of the hill on County Road. Much of her working experience is for charities, Enham Trust and NatCen for which she still works. As you know Ailsa is a generous spirit and Helen is grateful that from 3rd May, she will be working alongside her learning as much as possible before I fly solo from 28th May.

The text of Helen's address may be found as Appendix 2.

160417A.12 To receive questions from the floor.

Q: Are there any plans to move Sunday@4 from CC @ CC to Christ Church?

A: There are currently no plans to do this.

Q: Are we investing ours ethically?

A: We invest with CCLA, and so our investments are ethical in the context of the investments this organisation makes.

160417A.13 To set the provisional date for the next APCM (due Sunday 30th April 2017).

It is planned that the 2017 APCM will be at 11.45 am, followed by a bring-and-share lunch.

160417A.14 Any other business.

The meeting closed with prayer at 12.45 pm

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Appendix – Secretary's notes based on the published accounts.

Overall Summary:

1. In 2015 the operating surplus was £30,265. Once a legacy of £13,000 is taken out, this reduces to £17,265.
2. Total current available financial resources that can be used for church projects such as re-ordering of Christ Church amount to £450,885.
3. We have 4 months contingency reserves of £75,000 and additional variable investment income.
4. Income to the PCC in 2015 totalled £316,424 (down 41% on 2014). The main reason for this is that we benefitted from a large legacy in 2014.
5. Expenditure totalled £286,159 (down 2%). Included in these figures are the income and expenditure from CC @ CC is £57,149 and £61,499 respectively. Note that this last figure includes an amortisation of £15,278 in depreciation, a figure agreed with our accountants and based on 2% p.a. over 50 years. Although the figures for CC @ CC appear in our accounts, the PCC has decided that they are not included in our overall budget but are treated as 'belonging' to the Centre. The PCC has opted to draw an income from the Centre instead (£7,500 this year).
6. In 2015 we have again managed to keep our costs under strict control but have benefitted by only £13,000 in legacies (2014: £239,000). There is an overall surplus of £30,265 (2014: £244,355). When the income and expenditure from the legacy *and* CC @ CC are taken out, the surplus falls to £10,928.

Additional Information:

Income:

Planned giving (by envelope and standing order) was £70,179 (2014: £71,794) a decrease of 2%. Other giving (including open plate, gift days, other donations & appeals, a Deanery contribution, parish magazine & book sales) raised £21,556 (2014: £44,834) a decrease of 52%. The PCC thanks everyone who gave in 2014 / 15. All financial help is sincerely appreciated, no matter how small.

Fund raising, such as the Beer Festival, Autumn Fayre etc., has increased in 2015.

Expenditure:

We held Mission Gift Days in aid of our designated charities and raised £4,293 (2014: £3,888) an increase of about 10%. All of this was passed on to the charities together with the Gift-aid, where applicable. However, over 50% of our expenditure went to the Parish Share of £124,500 (2015: £120,000).

Church Buildings and property expenses have increased due to a mixture of maintenance costs and fees to the architect. Following the Quinquennial review in 2015, we have set aside money to pay for the repairs and maintenance highlighted in it. Properties (such as the cottages) have incurred reduced maintenance costs this year.

Total expenditure is broadly similar to 2014.

Projected Income:

The Stewardship Campaign, in September each year is very important. In particular, your responses help us to better anticipate the monies we will receive for a significant portion of our income.

- The majority of our income comes from planned giving, those that give a set amount on a regular basis. Total planned giving has decreased slightly in 2015 because people have moved away or died.
- Our investments continue to give us a profit along with income from properties
- The car park and events generate a significant portion of our disposable income.
- And we continue to bring in monies particularly for weddings.

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Projected Expenditure:

- We have budgeted to **increase our Parish Share** by the rate of inflation prevailing in September 2015. We continue to invest in our diocese viewing this as our wider mission in the local area, particularly choosing to believe and accept that we have a responsibility to bless other parishes that may not have as much and otherwise could not have paid clergy.
- We are investing in Mission to further our aim to connect the community with Christ..
- We continue to invest in our church buildings, our staff (& training) here at home in our own parish & internationally.

Remarks:

- We must continue to match what we spend to what we receive . This is easier to achieve with more certainty if everyone gives regularly by standing order. Thank you to those of you who already give in this way and especially to those who of you who did so for the first time in 2015.
- Our giving still needs to increase further and be planned more effectively.
- We cannot continue to rely upon regular use of our reserves.
- The Development and Renewal plans will remain. Good Stewardship must continue to be our prime focus.

Appendix 2 – Text of Helen Parker Drabble’s Address.

How does administration fit into the life of the church?

Christ Church is well known for it’s interaction with it’s parish. The ethos that comes across to me is No-one Forgotten.

But what is a parish administrator and how does administration fit into the life of your church?

Administration is threaded through every service and every action of the church and its community and I know many of you work tirelessly as volunteers. My role will be as a friendly face in the office hub freeing you up so you can utilise your gifts.

- Supporting your work
- answering questions,
- putting people in touch with each other
- generally running the office

I want to

- Learn from you,
- find out how you are connecting with the people of Old Town already,
- discover what you have planned and
- understand the challenges you face.

The annual British Social Attitudes survey showed that the proportion of British adults describe themselves as Anglican fell from 40% in 1983 to 17% in 2014 and among these we know many are not church goers. The biggest group remains people who say they have no religion, which accounts for around half (49%) of all people in Britain.

I cannot help but wonder if these statistics are reflective in the number of people who say they are lonely. Certainly the same study uncovered worrying signs of social erosion.

Single-person households have been described as the most significant demographic trend of the last 20 years. Particularly for those under 65, especially those between 25-44. So maybe it’s not so much a lunch club that’s needed, but maybe a supper club?

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Once the core administrative work is taken care of, you might want me to help you reach more people.

For example

- Following on from Flame FM, what about exploring the possibility of broadcasting a regular weekly service through our community radio station Swindon 105.5?
- How about a link with the Swindon Literature Festival? This year on 4 May Mr Wilson a leading social and cultural historian, argues the Bible remains relevant even in today's largely secular society. Would those attending the discussion be interested in getting together to talk more about this? If so, could that discussion happen here? What about a slip of paper on each seat in the Art Centre inviting people to a discussion?
- Or perhaps you would rather I looked at how we engage young people through social media?

Alternatively I could help you develop resources, raise awareness and facilitate links with new groups.

For example

Like many I am interested in family and social history. As I have walked in my ancestors footsteps I have tried, but often failed, to gain entry to their churches.

I am grateful when I find a church open. I buy postcards and history books and make donations. What I would most like to find is a booklet that could help me begin to understand the beliefs of those who came before me, something that puts my ancestor in a spiritual and social context through their involvement and worship at their church.

Why might we do that?

Thousands of people have shared this special place throughout its 160 years. Becoming a beacon for those exploring their family could bring new people to Christ Church, to a service, an event in the community centre, or remind others of the benefits of reflective time in a busy world.

I hope I have given you a flavour of how administration could further fit into the life of your church

Change can be difficult but I already know this is a special community and trust we will work together connecting ever more people with Christ Church and St Mary's ensuring that no-one is forgotten in our community.

I look forward to getting to know you all. Thank you