

St Giles Church Northampton

Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting for the Election of Churchwardens held 30th April 2023 in church and livestreamed

1. The meeting began at 10.15am with prayer and readings from Acts 2:42-end and John 10:1-10.
2. Ali Wagner, the Chair, explained the purpose of the vestry meeting for the appointment of churchwardens. Jessica Newlove and Jacqueline Wienkamp did not put themselves forward again this year to be churchwardens for their own personal reasons and the congregation were invited to speak to Jess and Jacqueline after the service should they want to know more.
3. David Lidbetter and Stephen Hewitson were proposed and seconded as our new churchwardens. There being no other nominations, David and Stephen were therefore duly appointed and there was no need for an election.
4. Jacqueline and Jess were presented with flowers as a thank you for their contribution and service to the life of our church over the last year. David and Stephen were also invited up to the front of church and Jacqueline and Jess prayed for them as they take on their new roles.
5. There was no other vestry business.

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 30th April in church and livestreamed

1. Apologies were received from Richard Deacon, Simon Bridgens, Gill Walker, Tim Walker, Penny Ballard, Stephen Hayward, Wynford Amos, Mark Cookman, Jacqui Hunter, and Jackie Ritchie.

2. Electoral Roll

The electoral roll stands at 183 of whom 7 are resident in the parish.

3. Minutes of the Annual Meeting 24th April 2022

It was proposed by Diane York that the minutes, as previously made available in the church and on the website, be accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Mike Kingman and the minutes were agreed and signed as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

4. Thanks

Thanks was given to Richard Deacon and Cathy Summerside who are stepping down as deputy wardens; Richard having served in the role for 34 years.

Thanks was given to Cathy Chew for her service as verger, and to Mike Kingman who is now stepping in to this role.

Thanks was given to Nicola Aylett for stepping in as 'assistant minister', over these last months, even though she had formally stepped down last year.

Thanks was given to Ali Wagner for all she has and continues to do for us at St Giles.

Thanks was also given to Jen and Mike Cope, and Helen Hewitson, who are stepping down from PCC this year.

5. Deputy Wardens

New deputy wardens were welcomed: Simon Challoner, Chris Davison, Tim Dixon, Ben Taylor, Tim Walker, and Janet Young.

6. Elections

Nomination of PCC Representatives

7 people were nominated for 7 vacancies, 5 for three years and 2 for 1 year. There being no other nominations, there was therefore no need for an election.

The following people were therefore duly elected:

Tom Burditt, Sine Cookman, Paul Cooper, Claire Vander Plaetse, Beth Whaites – 3 years.

Craig MacPherson, Rachel White- 1 year.

There was a question raised by a member of the congregation about whether a conflict of interest would arise having a staff member (Beth) as a PCC representative. It was explained that there is always a time at the beginning of each PCC meeting for a declaration of interest to be made and so Beth would need to utilise this if required.

Nomination of Deanery Synod Representatives

There being only 2 nominations for 5 (3 year) vacancies, Peter Day and Stephen Hewitson were duly elected. By virtue of their position on Deanery Synod, Deanery Synod Representatives also get a seat on the PCC.

PCC members, new and existing, were asked to see Helen Goff after the service to complete a trustee declaration form.

7. Annual Financial Accounts for 2022 and Budget for 2023

Derek Bish presented the slides regarding our 2022 end of year accounts and this year's budget.

At the end of 2022 we ran a deficit of £37,385. Despite our expenditure coming below budget, our income was almost 8% below budget. However, thanks was given to everyone who gives regularly or occasionally to St Giles as this voluntary giving income is more than 90% of all the income to the church.

Parish Share was paid in full by St Giles, representing 33% of our expenditure. Income from Parish Share accounts for about 75% of all income to the Diocese and used for training new clergy (curates such as Ali), housing clergy, and pensions and pay for clergy, as well as Diocesan staff.

Staff salaries represented 34% of our expenditure; and giving to home and world mission was 15%, as usual. We had no major building projects.

The good news is that despite last year's deficit, our financial reserves remained high and at the end of last year stood at £222,669, which is almost 8 months' worth of expenditure. Our policy is to aim to hold 5 months' worth of expenditure in reserve.

For 2023, the PCC have budgeted a bigger deficit, £65,999. This is because some allowance has been included to increase staff salaries and the overall property budget is around £17,000 higher than last year, partly due to the need to carry out Quinquennial works. The congregation were encouraged to speak to Duncan Halliday for more information. With income also slightly down, this largely accounts for the increased deficit budgeted for.

Although the church's reserves can still stand such a deficit, the not so good news is that by the end of this year it is possible and likely that the reserves will drop down close to the limit of the policy, which is

around £150,000. This has implications for the budget going into 2024, which the PCC will be looking to address in the coming months.

It was proposed by David Cline that DNG Dove Naish accountants be reappointed as auditors. This was seconded by Chris Davison and agreed unanimously.

Thanks were recorded to Anne Jackson, Serena Yong, and to Derek Bish for standing in for Anne whilst she is on maternity leave.

8. Safeguarding

St Giles adopts and supports the safeguarding policy employed by Peterborough Diocese and the Church of England. The recruitment policy at St Giles follows Safer Recruitment Guidelines for both paid and voluntary roles. All volunteers and church officers are required to undertake the appropriate safeguarding training. Our safeguarding officer is Louise Whaites and she can be contacted with any concern over the safety of children or vulnerable adults. We review our policy annually and the safeguarding team (Ali and Louise) meet once a month to review current safeguarding concerns and more regularly if needed. We take safeguarding very seriously at St Giles because it matters that everyone can thrive in this place. Ali reminded us that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The congregation were encouraged to contact Louise, on e-mail or by phone, if they have any concerns. The numbers are displayed on our website, and on posters in the centre and church. When Ali was off sick, Oliver Coss, the Dean of Greater Northampton, took oversight of Safeguarding at St Giles, with Louise and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

9. Staffing

Ali spoke about our much reduced staff team, with only 3 full time ministry staff- Ruth, Beth, and Ali; and 2 part time administrators- Helen and Serena; and Rob and Janet who take great care of our buildings. Ali expressed her thankfulness for each one of them. In a time of growth at St Giles, as well as challenges in the staff time this year with illness, Ali also expressed thankfulness to those stepping into new roles of responsibility, and for all those holding fast, praying, serving and committing themselves to the mission of Jesus at St Giles. Ali also expressed thanks to Nicola for the support she has shown St Giles and to Ali personally.

10. Questions on church matters

- **How have the parish boundaries changed? Do the changes mean there are other parishes which have ceased to exist?**

No parishes are ceasing to exist, there has just been an adjustment of the parish boundaries. The consultation period has recently finished and a plan can be seen on the noticeboard near the north door in church.

- **Do we have the funding to continue to employ Ruth?**

We do plan to commit to continue funding Ruth's role; however please keep giving into the restricted fund for Students and Young Adult's Ministry.

- **What is our 'away giving'?**

It has been a long-term policy of St Giles to give away a portion of our income. This equates to 10% to overseas mission and 5% to mission here in the UK (Mission On Our Doorstep).

- **How active are we in caring for creation?**

We still have much to do in this area at St Giles and to push the Diocese to commit to also.

11. Curate's message and prayer for the year ahead

Ali delivered a message relating to our readings from Acts 2 and John 10 about the Sheep and the Shepherds. This time last year Steve announced he would be retiring and thus stepped down in September. Hopefully we will get an announcement of a new vicar in the next few weeks. All of our activities here at St Giles though are not leaderless, the Holy Spirit is leading us in all of them. There are signs of life through Jesus our Good Shepherd.

12. Any Other Business

- Prayer for PCC Members

PCC and Deanery Synod Representatives were invited up to the front of church and we prayed for them.

- Letter from the Archdeacon and Message from David Lidbetter

David read out a letter from the Archdeacon, Richard Ormston, in which he expressed thanks to all lay people serving faithfully in churches which are in vacancy.

David expressed his own thanks to all those who helped in the interview process for our new vicar. An offer has been made and has been accepted subject to all the usual checks and we should have an announcement in the next few weeks.

13. The children returned into church and the meeting closed in worship.

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