

ST PETER'S CHURCH, BALSALL COMMON
Minutes of the 66th Annual Vestry Meeting
held on Sunday 18 May 2024 at 9:30am during the Communion Service
in St Peter's Church

In attendance:

The Rev'd Suzy Pearson (Vicar), Chris Lee (Treasurer), Alla Pavuka (Secretary).

There were 42 members of the congregation in attendance in church, namely: Geraldine Adair, Livia Baciú, Wendy Birkin, Rosemary Birse, Robert Bradley, William Chamberlain, Lauren Chamberlain, William Chapman, Leslie de Chernatony, Pat Eyre, Robert Farmer, Miriam Griffiths, David Hancock, Guy Hawes, Christine Hornsby, Christine Hughes, Christine Hunnisett, Tony Jenks, Moira Johnson, Amy Kershaw, Claire Laland, Stella Lamb, Eileen Lamb, Peter Lee, Stuart Lee, Megan Leighton, Malcolm Leighton, Bryan Marlow, Linda Marlow, Margaret Morgan, Jenny Mulvey, Anne Mulvey, John Pearson, Norrie Rasberry, Kim Rawson, Sarah Roth, Spirit Sadowska, Valerie Smith, Frank Spencer, Kimberley Steele, Rachel Westwood and Sue Williams, in addition to the above officers.

1. Notice of Convening Meeting

The Notice Convening the Meeting had been publicly displayed on the church noticeboard for the past three weeks and made available online.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Alison Bennett and Chris Price.

3. Minutes of the Vestry Meeting 2024

The Minutes of the 65th Annual Vestry Meeting held on Sunday 5th May 2024, distributed online, were agreed as a true record and signed.

4. Matters Arising from the Vestry Meeting 2024

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the 65th Annual Vestry Meeting held on Sunday 5th May 2024.

5. Election of Churchwardens:

There were two nominations for the position of Churchwarden:

Mr Stuart Lee and Mrs Sarah Roth

Both nominees were willing to serve.

All attendees at the meeting were in favour of the nominees: **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**

The Rev'd Suzy Pearson expressed her sincere thanks to Christine Hornsby for her dedicated service as Churchwarden over the past six years. Suzy also thanked Christine for the warm welcome extended to both her family and herself upon her appointment as Vicar of St Peter's.

The meeting concluded as the service continued.

ST PETER'S CHURCH, BALSALL COMMON
Minutes of the 66th Annual Parochial Church Meeting
held on Sunday 18 May 2024 at 9:30am during the Communion Service
in St Peter's Church

In attendance:

The Rev'd Suzy Pearson (Vicar), Chris Lee (Treasurer), Alla Pavuka (Secretary).

There were 42 members of the congregation in attendance in church, namely: Geraldine Adair, Livia Baciu, Wendy Birkin, Rosemary Birse, Robert Bradley, William Chamberlain, Lauren Chamberlain, William Chapman, Leslie de Chernatony, Pat Eyre, Robert Farmer, Miriam Griffiths, David Hancock, Guy Hawes, Christine Hornsby, Christine Hughes, Christine Hunnisett, Tony Jenks, Moira Johnson, Amy Kershaw, Claire Laland, Stella Lamb, Eileen Lamb, Peter Lee, Stuart Lee, Megan Leighton, Malcolm Leighton, Bryan Marlow, Linda Marlow, Margaret Morgan, Jenny Mulvey, Anne Mulvey, John Pearson, Norrie Rasberry, Kim Rawson, Sarah Roth, Spirit Sadowska, Valerie Smith, Frank Spencer, Kimberley Steele, Rachel Westwood and Sue Williams, in addition to the above officers.

6. Notice of Convening Meeting

The Notice Convening the Meeting had been publicly displayed on the church noticeboard for the past three weeks and made available online.

7. Apologies

Apologies were received from Alison Bennett and Chris Price.

8. Minutes of the Parochial Church Meeting 2024

The Minutes of the 65th Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 5th May 2024, distributed online, were agreed as a true record and signed.

9. Matters Arising from the Parochial Church Meeting 2024

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the 65th Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 5th May 2024.

10. Vicar's Report

The Vicar's Report had been posted online and is reproduced here:

"2024 will always be remembered by me as the year we came to St Peter's. I had a strong sense that God was calling us here – and since arriving, this has only been confirmed.

As a family, this has been a year of big change, and we are so grateful for the warm welcome we've received. Thank you to all who have helped us settle in, and particularly to the churchwardens and all those who worked so faithfully during the vacancy.

In these first few months, I've been learning how things happen at St Peter's. I appreciate the variety of worship and the rhythm of different services, especially the value placed on coming together monthly for All-Age Communion. My hope is that we will continue to grow strong intergenerational relationships as we worship and minister side by side. I also pray that as a church we will grow in relationship with the other churches in the Oversight Area. In November, representatives from each of the parishes (Knowle, Temple Balsall, Barston,

Bickenhill, Hampton, Marston Green and St Peter's) came together for a formation day and I look forward to seeing where God leads us.

Within my first couple of weeks of arriving here, I had the opportunity to meet staff from the primary school. I was especially encouraged by their enthusiasm for bringing pupils to the church to experience the Christmas story. Thank you to the team who ran the Follow the Star event — welcoming around 300 children (and even a couple of sheep!). Hearing the church full of voices singing O Holy Night as Kim and the choir led us was another particular highlight of my first Christmas at St Peter's. I look forward to deepening our connections with the school and the wider community in the coming years.

I write this with a heart full of gratitude for each and every person who makes up the body of Christ at St Peter's. It has been a joy to start to get to know everyone and experience the broad range of ministries here. We hope that we will be here for a long time and I look forward to getting to know you more and sharing in ministry with you.

Thank you for the privilege of joining you in this next chapter.”

Members of the congregation and group leaders were invited to share their experiences at St Peter's.

Rachel Westwood shared how much she values the Exploring Faith groups, describing them as open, supportive spaces where relationships are built and honesty is welcomed. She expressed gratitude for the chance to learn and grow alongside others in a safe and encouraging environment.

Lauren Chamberlain reflected on feeling genuinely welcomed by everyone and highlighted the importance of Family Services in helping her children feel comfortable and excited to be part of the church community.

Ted and Di Perkin sent a message expressing their deep appreciation for the love, community spirit, and support they have experienced at St Peter's, especially during recent health challenges.

Moira Johnson shared about ministry at Harper Fields, noting that several residents there feel a strong connection to St Peter's and are welcomed as part of the church family.

Eileen Lamb spoke about the Open the Book team and how it provides meaningful opportunities for outreach into local schools. She highlighted the value of prayer support and the ongoing need for volunteers – especially men – to support storytelling and behind-the-scenes roles.

Linda Marlow gave an overview of Teeny Tinies and Toddlers, a group that meets weekly in the church hall. She described it as a welcoming and safe environment where relationships are nurtured among carers, children, and volunteers. She also noted the need for additional helpers to support the group's continued success.

11. Treasurer's Report and Accounts for 2024

The Treasurer's Report, by Chris Lee, had been posted online and is reproduced here:

“Church: Overall the church suffered a deficit of £1,175, compared to a surplus of £1,212 in 2023. Voluntary giving decreased by £2,344 between 2023 and 2024. There was only a small amount of fundraising, and parish fees also fell, since the number of services were lower.

Costs were generally under control, but the PCC agreed to give £48,000 to the Common Fund, £2,167 more than in 2023. In addition there were some costs incurred on the vicarage which the PCC covered.

The sequestration accounts were submitted to the diocese, and the PCC received approximately £1,500 towards the cost of clergy cover for our services and St Peters House expenses whilst it was empty.

Our focus in 2025 must be to return to raising enough income to at least cover our expenses, including £50,000 which the PCC have committed to give to Common Fund. The full ask from the diocese was over £80,000.

Hall: The surplus on the Hall account dropped from £5,875 in 2023 to £3,967 in 2024. Although letting income remained steady, costs increased due to the rise in utility bills, and higher maintenance costs.

The accounts for the Charities Commission have been audited and will be filed in due course.”

The Accounts had been posted online prior to the meeting. The Treasurer proposed that the PCC Accounts be accepted.

All attendees at the meeting were in favour:

UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED

The Rev'd Suzy Pearson thanked Chris Lee for her diligent and accurate handling of the church's accounts.

12. Churchwardens' Report

The Churchwardens' Report, by Sarah Roth, had been posted online and is reproduced here:

“What a year it has been since Reverend Suzy Pearson started in September 2024.

Again, very big acknowledgement must go to Christine Hornsby for the fantastic job she did ensuring our church has a Minister each week until Suzy started.

Since Reverend Suzy started, we have seen many more families joining us to participate in our all-age services. Its great having all generations coming together and contributing together to worship.

The outside cleaners continue to do a fortnightly clean and the 6 fruit trees we obtained with donations are flourishing (5 of them). Our community orchard is another step forward towards our Gold Eco Church recognition.

We have not yet completed the terrier and inventory. Again, another big undertaking and I hope we will complete this soon. Each item in church must be documented and photographed – from hymn books to chairs and silverware.

We have recently completed a hall survey to determine opinions from church hall users and aim to obtain funding to have the hall renovated.

Christine will be leaving her stint as Church Warden, and we will have a new Warden to welcome.

We thank Christine for everything she has done for the church especially her exceptional organisational skills filling the weekly slots for visiting Clergy.”

13. Secretary's Report

The Secretary's Report, by Alla Pavuka, had been posted online and is reproduced here:

“The PCC has continued to meet regularly throughout 2024, with five full meetings held in the church. These meetings have provided space for meaningful discussions on a wide range of topics including the interregnum (in the first half of the year), financial planning and fundraising, safeguarding, Eco Church matters, and ongoing maintenance of both the church and the hall.

A significant milestone in our year was in September, when we were delighted to welcome Suzy Pearson as our Vicar. Her arrival brought new momentum and vision to St Peter' and we look forward to continuing our journey together under her leadership.

A special thank you also goes to the Tech Team for their consistent efforts in supporting the church's audiovisual systems, live streaming, and the maintenance of our website and social media platforms. Their behind-the-scenes work makes a significant contribution to our outreach and communications.

I'd also like to extend heartfelt thanks to all who serve on the PCC. The roles are many and varied, and each one plays a valuable part in the life of St Peter's.

This year, I am stepping down from the PCC. I wish the PCC all the very best as you continue with focus, energy, and a shared commitment to serving the parish and the wider church community.”

The Rev'd Suzy Pearson thanked Alla Pavuka for her dedicated service as PCC Secretary.

14. Safeguarding Officer's Report

The Safeguarding Officer's Report, by Alison Bennett, had been posted online and is reproduced here:

“1. Introduction

At St Peter's Church, Balsall Common we recognise that the few who are determined to harm children or adults, deliberately seek out groups or organisations where they can meet children or other vulnerable people. The Church is particularly vulnerable to these people. Creating and maintaining a safeguarding culture will discourage them from becoming involved for the wrong reasons and make it difficult for them to harm or abuse children or adults if they do.

2. Formal Obligation

In respect of all reported Safeguarding concerns, St Peter's Church, Balsall Common has complied with our duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and clergy discipline measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). Working in line with Church of England Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.

3. Safeguarding Roles

Parish Safeguarding Officer – Alison Bennett

DBS Recruiter and Verifier – Alison Bennett

Safeguarding Lead for Domestic Violence – Moira Johnson

4. Safeguarding Policy, Guidance and Information

Up to date information pertaining to St Peter's Safeguarding Policy can be found at: <https://www.spcbalsall.church/contact/safeguard/>

5. Safeguarding Learning and Development

During 2024, several members of our congregation completed or updated their Safeguarding Training in line with the guidance issued by the Church of England, Birmingham.

Opportunities and challenges in safeguarding learning

All safeguarding training is completed online. This may be a challenge for some people and a provision will be made to support those unable to do this independently.

6. Safer Recruitment and People Management

St Peter's Church, Balsall Common is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults, and the care and nurture of children within our church communities. We will carefully select, train and support all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles. This means that we will:

- Ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent.

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children or adults from taking up, in our Church, positions of respect, responsibility or authority where they are trusted by others.
- Adhere to safer recruitment legislation, guidance and standards, responding positively to changing understandings of good safer recruitment practice.
- Always seek advice from the diocesan safeguarding team to achieve best possible practice.
- Ensure training on safer recruitment practice guidance is completed by appropriate postholders.

7. Concerns Raised (2024)

a. Number of safeguarding concerns shared with Parish Safeguarding Officer – 3

b. Number of referrals made to Diocesan Safeguarding Team – 3

c. Number for which advice on necessity of external referrals received – 1

Actioned – 2

Outstanding actions – 1

8. Additional Information

None

9. Next Steps

Whilst there is no legal requirement to update DBS certificates on a 3 yearly basis, this is considered best practice by the church of England. The DBS register is up to date for St Peter’s church.”

15. Electoral Roll

The Rev’d Suzy Pearson presented the Electoral Roll Summary. She reported that every six years, all churches are required to complete a full revision of their Electoral Roll – 2025 being one of those years. The final number on the Electoral Roll currently is 81.

The Rev’d Suzy Pearson thanked Rosemary Birse, Electoral Roll Officer, for her hard work in preparing the new Electoral Roll.

16. Deanery Synod Report

The Deanery Synod Report, by Peter Lee, had been posted online and is reproduced here:

“The Deanery Synod met at 7pm at the following churches:

Feb 6th – St Margaret’s, Olton

Fred Rattley spoke about the 4th Mark of Mission, which is to support Christian activities that alleviate poverty and disadvantage – such as coffee mornings for the isolated, immigrants, and refugees. The aim was to provide a safe place and a warm welcome.

June 4th – St Mary’s, Acocks Green

Caroline Egan, the Assistant Diocesan Environmental Officer, spoke about Eco Church and our part in becoming an Eco Diocese. She encouraged all parishes to be aware of local green issues and to begin the journey of reducing carbon emissions, championing the Church of England’s aim to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Oct 8th – St Edburgha’s, Yardley

The new Area Dean, Revd Tony Rindl, spoke to us. He was born in Marston Green and spent the early years of his life worshipping at St Edburgha’s!

Treasurers from many churches in the Deanery attended this meeting especially to hear Karen Preece, the Director of Finance for the Diocese, speak about the Common Fund. She presented slides concerning the budget. Year by year there had been a shortfall, although our Deanery was fulfilling over 90% of its parish commitment. The Diocesan budget covered clergy stipends, clergy housing, and a number of special teams assisting parishes with safeguarding, care of buildings, finance, and community regeneration. There is to be a new method of calculating each parish’s Common Fund contribution.

Each meeting of this Deanery Synod brought our parishes together in harmony and Christian friendship.”

1. List of Sidespersons

The List of Sidespersons, by Sarah Roth, had been posted online.

2. Election of four Parochial Church Council Members

The following members of the congregation had been nominated to join the PCC:

- Rosemary Birse
- Robert Farmer
- Christine Hornsby
- Chris Lee

Nominations, Proposers and Seconders had been submitted for all the above.

ELECTED UNOPOSED

The Rev'd Suzy Pearson expressed her sincere thanks to Ted Perkins, who was stepping down from the PCC. She acknowledged Ted's valuable contributions over the years and noted that he has been greatly missed during his recent absence. She conveyed the prayers and best wishes of the church community to Ted and Di during this time.

3. Election of one Deanery Synod Member

Not applicable, as no election is required this year.

4. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Chris Lee reported that Alison Lowe had offered to continue in the role.

The Rev'd Suzy Pearson proposed that Alison Lowe continues to be our Independent Examiner.

All attendees at the meeting were in favour:

UNANIMOUSLY AGREED

5. Attached Reports of Church Organisations

Reports from the following groups have been published online prior to the APCM to reduce printing paper costs, energy and resource usage:

- Churches Together in Balsall and Berkswell (CTBB) – Christine Hunnisett, Eileen Lamb
- Eco Church Update – Rachel Westwood
- Exploring Faith – Monday Group – Claire Laland
- Exploring Faith – Tuesday Group – Eileen Lamb
- Exploring Faith – Wednesday Group – Leslie de Chernatony
- Exploring Faith – Friday Group – Moira Johnson
- Hall Booking Report – Christine Hornsby
- Harper Fields – Moira Johnson
- Intercessors – Claire Laland
- Music – Kim Rawson
- 'Open The Book' – Eileen Lamb
- Premises Report – Bryan Marlow
- Readers Report – Alison Bennett, Chris Price and Moira Johnson
- St Peter's Mothers' Union – Alison Bennett, Claire Laland and Chris Price

- Teeny Tinies and Toddlers – Linda Marlow and Sue Clinton
- Warm Welcome Hub / Warm Welcome Café – Moira Johnson

[APCM 2025 - St Peter / Balsall Common](#)

If anyone does not have access to the online reports, hard copies can be provided by Suzy Pearson.

6. Any Other Business

There being no further business.

The meeting concluded as the service continued.