



St HELEN'S CHURCH
ABINGDON-ON-THAMES

Minutes of Annual District Church Meeting held on Passion Sunday, 17 March 2024, in the nave aisle of St Helen's, beginning at 12.08pm.

- 1) **Present:** Revd Dr Charles Miller and 44 lay parishioners in person, with two others joining by zoom. Revd Dr A Adam, Revd Dr J Brown, Revd R Rutherford and Revd D Bevington were also in attendance.
- 2) The Rector opened the meeting with **prayer**.
- 3) **Apologies:** Geoff Meen, Sue Pemberton
- 4) **Minutes of the ADCM** held on 3 April 2023. These had not been circulated but the Rector believed his copy to be accurate. Acceptance prop. D Pope, sec. L Hobbs, carried nem. con., with three abstentions.
- 5) **Elections.**
 - i) Nominations for **two churchwardens**: David Pope is willing to continue and has been duly proposed H Pope, seconded S Tonks. Linda Hobbs is standing down; Margaret Horton has been nominated to succeed her (prop. G Bevington, sec M Anderson), having generously indicated her willingness to stand (she served 6 years in the past, so brings a wealth of experience to the role). There were no other nominations, so David and Margaret were duly elected. Charles thanked Linda Hobbs for her dedicated and fruitful 7-year stint, alongside initially N Gee, latterly D Pope and for several years in an excellent partnership with G Meen. Our district wardens are also parish wardens; Linda has done sterling, hidden work in bringing the six wardens together in fellowship and friendship. Those present marked their appreciation with prolonged applause. Linda will officially continue as Warden until the APCM, and only fully relinquish the role on 4 June, when new wardens will be sworn in.
 - ii) Nominations for **pro-wardens**: Last year we elected three pro-wardens, as supporters of and at times apprentices to churchwardens. Chris Jefferis (prop. D Pope, sec N Gee), Sarah Jones (prop. G Bevington, sec K Cook) and Rob Bough (prop. C Jefferis, sec D Pope) are all willing to continue and were duly elected. .
 - iii) **DCC members** include ex-officio wardens, pro-wardens, PCC members and deanery synod reps. Those additionally elected to the DCC: Kathleen Cook, Peter Foster, Norman Gee, Elizabeth Irving, Geoff Meen, Sue Pemberton, Elizabeth Simpson.
 - iv) **PCC**: Susan Read and Kate Burland continue. In addition, Mary Anderson is willing to stand (prop S Pemberton, sec G Bevington). All three are elected to the PCC. [Since the meeting, S Read has stood down from the PCC.]

6) **Annual report:** Charles drew attention to the Report and noted that it shows a lot going on. Not all may be aware of activity in which they are not involved. E Simpson asked about her report on Stewarding, which had not been included; Charles will follow this up.

7) Susan Read presented the **Financial Report**. She had produced and circulated a 2-side statement of accounts for 2023, and gave time to explaining the difference between general and restricted/designated funds. The major contribution to income is from donors, and the major item of expenditure is the parish share. Endowments are mainly from legacies. The prepared statement shows where actual expenditure/income differs from that budgeted – differences which can be favourable or adverse. Susan said we need to keep growing the congregation to avoid future small deficits to the General Fund as in 2023. Volunteers who work for the church save us paying people and deserve our thanks

H Glennie wondered if the interest from the E Hawking legacy could be given to the food bank. (This is not possible.)

M Anderson voiced thanks from the floor for Susan's own work on behalf of the church. She also drew attention to Christian Aid materials on legacies.

The Rector asked if the meeting would receive the accounts (yes). He said that new congregational members do not give financial support immediately, but will do so in time. It would help if all congregants could be encouraged to respond to the autumn stewardship letter. We need to see money as a way to take good initiatives, not just to keep going. He also thanked S Read, whose daily toil he often witnesses.

8) Trust for the Development of St Helen's, and Reordering of the Church (T4Dosh). The meeting elected Susan Read and Steve Thomas to continue as T4Dosh trustees. The Reordering Project has reached the stage of being poised to arrange new lighting for the church, which will be transformative. Chris Jefferis is in charge of the lighting project and has submitted a full report, included in the Annual Report. We hope to start fundraising soon and to submit the faculty application later in the year.

9) Rector's report. Charles drew attention to this. He also expressed his thanks to the members of the DCC who have worked with him through the year.

10) David Pope drew attention to the APCM, which will be held on Thursday 18 April at 7pm in the South Aisle.

The meeting closed at 12.58pm with the praying together of the Grace.

