

All Saints Church

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (Meeting of the Parishioners, Annual General Meeting and the Parochial Church Council Meeting)
Sunday 4th May 2025 at 11am, All Saints Church and on-line

Minutes

Chair: Revd Joe Moffat.

Attendance: The number attending was 56 (plus 37 on-line); apologies: 5

Meeting of the Parishioners

The minutes of this meeting of 28th April 2024 were approved unanimously. There were no matters arising.

Election of Churchwardens

Roshan Jathanna (proposed by John Dewhurst, seconded by Ann Cornick);
John Dewhurst (proposed by Isabel Isaacson, seconded by Elizabeth Deller)
were elected unanimously.

The meeting recorded its thanks to John and Roshan for their huge contribution as Churchwardens to the life of the Church during the last year and also to the ministry of the church.

Annual General Meeting

The minutes of this meeting of 28th April 2024 were approved unanimously. There were no matters arising.

Thanks was recorded to the following PCC members standing down this year:

Keith Long

Graham Nash

Eithne Fray (standing down as an elected member but now co-opted to continue on the committee)

Election of new PCC representatives

The following three new PCC members were all proposed and seconded as follows.

Melanie Woodcock: proposed by John Dewhurst; seconded by Roshan Jathanna

Joe Holder: proposed by John Dewhurst; seconded by Roshan Jathanna

Penny D'Souza: proposed by Sian Adams; seconded by Ann Cornick

The meeting agreed to vote on all three nominations together and the three were unanimously elected.

The meeting recorded its thanks to all those who serve on the All Saints PCC.

Financial Report

The Financial Statements and Annual Report contain all the details of the church's financial situation in 2024 – these are available on the Church website and there were paper copies available at the meeting. A brief overview of the Church's finances was presented by Gareth Williams who was elected Treasurer earlier in the year. He began with the total income and expenditure for the year across all funds. The total income was £424,000 and total expenditure was £457,000. There was a net overall deficit of £11,000. To put this in context, in the previous year (2023) there was a deficit of £72,000. This was the result of expenditure on two large capital projects: the replacing of the existing inefficient lighting system and the organ repairs project. The total funds position at the year-end had decreased by £11,000 and was confirmed at £178,000 (this excludes the valuation of building at 48 Union Street (£350,000)). Some key highlights of 2024: as is usual, planned giving was the largest single source of income with £94,000 received from it in 2024 (an increase from £88,000 in 2023). This illustrates the importance to the church of planned giving and anyone not currently participating in this is encouraged

to consider signing up to it. Amounts given can also be added to by Gift Aid. Thanks was recorded to all those who give in this way. It is greatly appreciated. Again, as is usual, our largest single expenditure was to the Diocese in the form of the Parish Support Fund contribution: this was £122,000 in 2024 (increased from £117,000 in 2023). Following discussions in the PCC and with future repair projects in mind we applied to reduce our 2025 contribution to £110,000 which was agreed with the Diocese. (The average amount of parish giving within the Diocese is £90,000 and we have stayed above this and will try to build it up again for the future.) Additional costs came from a full year of the 'reinvigorated staffing plan' – the results have shown this to be well worth it. We received significant long-term funding (through to 2029) from the Southwark Diocese Investment Programme to assist our Lifting Young Voices project and for which we are very grateful. Thanks also goes to the following for grants received: Cathedral Music Trust (£5,000); Ouseley Church Music Trust (£4,000) and Voluntary Community & Social Enterprise (£5,000 for enhancing bio-diversity in the church grounds). Upcoming projects were highlighted: bells restoration; give to go green; Quinquennial inspection projects categorised as Grade A items (estimates of likely costs of these will be sought so that realistic plans can be made). We are reliant on a variety of income streams and cannot afford to lose any of them. We also need to plan for resilience but putting aside amounts for fabric fund needs where we can. The general financial outlook is cautiously optimistic whilst not underestimating the expense and challenges of maintain our Church. Gareth recorded his thanks to Alastair for his work over the preceding years and for his continued support and assistance. The meeting expressed its gratitude to Alastair and Gareth.

Election of an Independent Examiner for the Parochial Church Accounts

Gareth proposed that HPH Chartered Accountants, who have worked successfully and efficiently with us for some years, should continue as our independent examiner (but will be kept under review); this was seconded by Alastair Deller; this was approved unanimously by the meeting.

Electoral Roll Report

The major task for this year was the preparation of an entirely new roll for the church, produced from scratch. We don't make major revisions between the production of new rolls (which happens every six years), although we can add names, so this will be the time when we get a realistic idea of actual numbers. We now have a new roll comprising the names of all who have completed the appropriate forms requesting inclusion on the church electoral, with the total currently standing at 138, which is significantly lower than previously. Following the APCM we can begin to build the numbers once more so that they reflect the true extent of the church community. Isabel has agreed to continue with the work on the electoral roll for the time being and this was unanimously approved by the meeting.

Annual Report

The Annual Report, compiled by Jenny Bridges, was circulated at the meeting and also published on the website in advance of the meeting.

Everyone was encouraged to look through the report in full as it gives a good, detailed overview of the work and activities of the church. It has been structured in a new more logical way starting with the Diocesan vision and working down through Deanery, Team Ministry and PCC. Joe picked out some highlights: the Mission Action Plan four priorities; groups around worship and prayer.

The Churchwardens drew attention to the huge amount of activity taking place in our busy church and recorded thanks to all the volunteers (probably around 200) who help to make this happen. We are doing what a town-centre church in the 21st Century ought to be doing – we keep the doors open and welcome everyone. They recorded thanks to Joe and the clergy team and to the PCC and all who support the church in many different ways. Congratulations were recorded for Roshan's election to the Diocesan Council of Trustees representing the Diocesan Synod.

The Southwark Diocese summary of its mission 'Christ centred and outward focused' was commended and seen as a touchstone to come back to.

Thanks was recorded to Alex Crook our Safeguarding Officer for helping to make the church a safe place for everyone, for keeping up with the checks and audits and for her prompt and professional response and support when needed.

Our Mission Action Plan aim to connect with younger people is represented by the success of the Lifting Young Voices project and as of last week we are now in seven primary schools. We also have regular All-age services to include the young singers.

Thanks was also recorded to Sarah Cantrill for her work with schools visiting All Saints for history workshops and re-enactments on a regular basis.

Last year a new brand was created to represent the Church; other ways to communicate followed including the regular e-bulletin and the launch of a new website. Thanks to Communications Manager, Kate.

Another priority is Eco Church – although Graham has now left he took us to the Bronze Award level and the work of the group continues. We have an annual Creation Sunday service. Thanks was recorded for the work of the gardening group especially its influence in helping to keep the churchyard tidy and mostly litter-free.

Our core task is to offer worship throughout the year. This is with the help of our music department and special thanks to David Condry for the brilliant job he does in leading our choir and developing the music on offer. The Bell Ringers also go from strength to strength attracting new members to the team. Thanks to Eithne and her team for their work with the children's church. Thanks to everyone who volunteers and helps throughout the year. Several prayer groups have been developed within the church – inspiration has come from Sarah Williams and her initiative to examine different ways to pray. The Saxon Kings final three panels are being created two of which will be installed at the end of August. The programme for the Athelstan celebrations is now available.

The many varied activities which are described in the Report and which take place on a regular basis throughout the year were noted and thanks expressed to all who make sure that these continue to be successful.

POINTS RAISED FROM THE FLOOR

There will be new Athelstan merchandise in the shop ready for the celebrations.

AOB

Michael Stokes will be joining the clergy team as a curate. He will be ordained as a deacon at the end of June when we will look forward to welcoming him.

Joe ended the meeting by expressing appreciation to everyone for giving their time to take part in the annual meeting and adding that it was good to be part of such a wonderful and vibrant church. He thanked everyone for their participation and partnership in this ministry.