

St John and St Luke, Bilton

Minutes of the Meeting to Elect Churchwardens and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 18th May 2025 at 12.00 noon
at St John's Church, Bilton Lane

Present: Laura Martin (Chair), Noel Duke, Patricia Johnson, Pat Fenton, Val Carr, Judith Ashurst, Jane Thompson, Colin Ashurst, Laura Beesley, Henry Pemberton, Jenny Caldwell, Jan Johnson, Clive Davis, Claire Golightly, Ian Thomson-Smith, Madeline Wolfe, Anne Saxon, Jenny Winchester, Glen Hocken, Felicity Hildred, Andrew McHutchon, Cathy McHutchon, Sarah Shepherd, John Carr, Jane Reichert, Nigel Thompson, Phill Holdsworth, Penny Holdsworth, Alethea Fry, Steve Fry, David Williams, Lynda Blyde, Ann Moorey, Sheena Hodgeon, Mike Illingworth, Caroline Harkness, Richard Hinson, Deborah Pritchard, Daffyd Pritchard and Helen Mayers (Secretary)

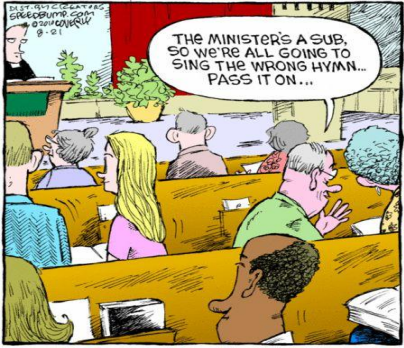
Meeting to Elect Churchwardens

1	Welcome and Opening Prayer – Laura Martin welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened with prayer.
2	Election of Churchwardens – The following 4 nominations for the position of churchwarden had been received: St John's: Nigel Thompson – proposed by Jane Reichert , seconded by Hilary Turner Jane Reichert – proposed by Nigel Thompson , seconded by Jane Thompson St Luke's: Alethea Fry - proposed by Pat Fenton , seconded by Sarah Shepherd Colin Ashurst - proposed by Sarah Shepherd , seconded by Mary Griffin There being no further nominations, the four above-named were duly elected by unanimous vote of the meeting. Nominations are held in the PCC file. Laura thanked the wardens for their service and support.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1	Apologies for absence – Apologies were received from David Brown, Michael Crone, Pete Fenton, Pat Harrison, Terry Harrison, Judi Hooper, Paul Hooper, Christine Raper, Linda Williams and Caroline Wise.
2	Minutes of the last meeting held on 19th May 2024 – The minutes of the last meeting were proposed as drawn by Val Carr, seconded by Andrew McHutchon and were approved by unanimous vote of the meeting. There were no matters arising.
3	Electoral Roll reports from St John's & St Luke's – Laura thanked Deb Pritchard and Steve Fry for agreeing to take over the role of Electoral Roll Officer for St John's and St Luke's respectively, and expressed gratitude to their predecessors, Sarah Shepherd and the late Jean Burton, for their many years of service. It was noted that this year was one in which the electoral rolls had had to be recompiled from scratch, and that for the first time it had been possible, if preferred, for church members to complete the necessary application online by scanning a QR code, as well as by hard copy. The new numbers were reported as follows:

	<p>St John's – Deb Pritchard reported that the current total on the new St John's roll stood at 210, an increase of 12 from the 2024 figure.</p> <p>St Luke's – Steve Fry reported that the current total on the new St Luke's roll stood at 41, a decrease of 16 on last year's figures. This, however, did not accurately reflect the number of people regularly attending St Luke's, which had seen a period of growth.</p> <p>Overall numbers attending both churches had been static.</p>
4	<p>The Annual Report –</p> <p>Laura drew the attention of the meeting to the document comprising the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024, which had previously been distributed to attendees. She confirmed that the PCC had complied with the duty to abide by the Bishops' rules on safeguarding.</p> <p>Finance Report –</p> <p>Attention was firstly directed to the church accounts for 2024. Laura took the meeting through a brief finance summary, which had been provided by the Treasurer, Laura reminding the meeting that for several years now the full amount of parish share requested from us by the diocese had not been paid. Parish share is calculated in reference to several factors, including the deprivation index and number of people on the church rolls. Harrogate is deemed to be an affluent area and this, combined with the size of our church, means we are asked to pay more than average. Laura advised that, whilst parish share is a voluntary contribution, it is a matter of sadness that we are unable to meet the requested amount in full.</p> <p>Questions on finances were invited, and two queries were raised:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How much shortfall is there year on year? Answer – approx. £10,000, but it's had to be accurate as the amount requested changes on an annual basis. We have been in a static situation for the past few years. 2. Why is regular giving down? Answer – Some contributors have died, others have stopped paying altogether for unknown reasons and not many people have felt able to increase their giving. Some legacy money had been received but with the proviso that it be ring-fenced for buildings. <p>It was noted that in terms of capital assets, the two properties at Albany Road and Coppice Way had not been revalued for some time and so were likely to be of higher value than the accounts might indicate. Laura offered sincere thanks to our Treasurer, David Brown, for all his hard work and for always being gracious and helpful.</p> <p>The meeting was then invited to consider the Annual Report of parish activities, including the Fabric and Deanery Synod reports. There being no questions on the contents, Laura thanked the church wardens for their diligence, the Deanery Synod reps, and all those who contributed items to the report, highlighting the rich life of our churches.</p> <p>The Annual Report and Accounts were then put to the meeting for approval as drawn:</p> <p>Proposed – Mike Illingworth Seconded – Claire Golightly All in favour</p>
5	<p>Election of parochial representatives of the laity to the Parochial Church Council –</p> <p>Laura thanked all those who had come to the end of their terms on PCC, or were standing down, and advised that this year there were 5 possible PCC vacancies, with 5 nominations received:</p> <p>Laura Beesley - proposed by Nigel Thompson, seconded by Gill Clarke</p> <p>Judith Hooper – proposed by Jane Reichert, seconded by Jenny Caldwell (<i>to cover 1 year casual vacancy</i>)</p> <p>Caroline Randall – proposed by Deborah Pritchard, seconded by Lynda Blyde</p> <p>William Martin – proposed by Alethea Fry, seconded by Sarah Shepherd (<i>to cover 2 year casual vacancy</i>)</p> <p>Anne Saxon – proposed by Jane Thompson, seconded by Nigel Thompson</p> <p>All candidates were elected by unanimous vote of the meeting.</p>

6	<p>Appointment to PCC of the Reader licensed to the parish –</p> <p>It was put to the meeting for approval that our licensed Reader, Jan Johnson, be a member of the PCC:</p> <p>Proposed – Daffyd Pritchard Seconded - Jenny Caldwell All in favour</p>
7	<p>Appointment of the Independent Examiner –</p> <p>Darren Tiffney had graciously agreed to continue as our Independent Examiner and his appointment was put to the meeting for approval:</p> <p>Proposed – Jan Johnson Seconded – Val Carr All in favour.</p> <p>Laura thanked Darren for the work he had done in this regard over the past year.</p>
8	<p>Message from the Team Vicar (verbatim) –</p>  <p>I saw this....and it seemed fitting as we look back over 2024, a year partially spent juggling our resources as we adapted in the wake of saying farewell to our Rector of 10 years, Simon. Thank you to our retired clergy (John, Judith, Paul, Pam, David and David), to Jan, and to all those who lead for going above and beyond. We all appreciate it (and we promise to continue to be kind and not to sing the wrong hymns on purpose).</p> <p>We should also take this opportunity to thank Emma for the phenomenal contribution she has made to the young people of this parish in her 5 years with us. What a legacy she leaves, we will miss her very much – she has raised up a fabulous team to keep things going until we can – hopefully – appoint a new YPW. Also, we should once again thank Simon (and his family) for their commitment to this community and for all the time, love, friendship and vision which they dedicated to us over the course of that decade. Likewise, we acknowledge today that we are both delighted and excited to soon be welcoming Reverend Matthew, his wife Emily and his daughter Evie to minister here in Bilton as our new Rector. I do hope many of you will come along to Matthew’s licensing here on 10th June as we celebrate this important occasion for both he and his family and for the people of St John’s and St Luke’s. Church leadership is not an easy calling, and it is vital that we all offer our care and support to help Matthew settle well into his new role and indeed his new home.</p> <p>But, in all this, let’s not mistakenly believe that the people who stand here at the microphone are the only people with leadership roles in this church community. Another significant event of 2024 was the sudden death of Jean Burton, who left behind a huge gap - not only in our hearts but also because of the many aspects of church life that she led or was involved with. We acknowledge today the huge part she has played in this community and the many people who have been blessed by her dedicated ministry. What Jean did was so vital because we are not a business, we are the body of Christ. We are in it together, each playing our part. We are about ‘every member ministry’ and shared, collaborative leadership. Jean <u>was on the team.....and you are all on the team.</u></p> <p>The role of clergy is not to do everything themselves, rather to ensure that everything gets done. And today I want to encourage you, because last year there was - I sense - a growth in leadership confidence. It was a joy to see services led by home groups, by musicians and choristers and by people who have not led for some time (or indeed ever before). It was also brilliant to see people put themselves forward to head up the management of the coffee mornings, to lead courses and teams, to support home group leaders, to oversee the rhythm of life initiative, to begin a Fresh Expression of worship at Dene Park, to lead youth and children’s work and empower young leaders....and that willingness to step up has already carried on into 2025 with roles around editing the church magazine, the Pause drop-in, gift aid and the electoral roll.</p> <p>There has been growth, not only in numbers (which there was by the end of last year across both churches according to our mission statistics), but in our collective willingness to step out and serve even if it means going a little beyond our comfort zone or committing a bit of extra time. Trawling back at old parish profile</p>

paperwork during the rector recruitment process, I noted a recurrent theme: the recognition that there was buried treasure in this congregation, gifts of diamonds and jewels that still needed to be unearthed and polished off so that they could sparkle. Well, I think God has been digging at the soil during this vacancy and I think some of that buried treasure is coming to the surface and is being polished to a brilliant shine. There are some very gifted people in these congregations....yes, I mean, you. It is so easy to think "oh I couldn't possibly do that." Why not? The bible clearly reminds us that God uses all sorts of people to advance the kingdom of God. Why would he *not* use you? Of course we are not all called to leadership, but we are all called to serve in some way and to make a difference using the gifts we have been given - and all gifts are of equal value within the body of Christ. So please, don't let any precious treasure stay hidden underground. Allow God to dig, even if the rake is a bit prickly and uncomfortable, and let's be courageous and see what new jewels we will see sparkling in this place as we progress through this current year. Matthew is coming to shepherd us but he is **not** coming to take everything on - that would be exhausting. He has a young family and we must support him in creating a good work-life balance. He is coming to work *with* us in our *shared* desire to advance the kingdom of God. We are ALL on the team. We must pray that confidence in our collective abilities continues to increase, that new leaders are encouraged and empowered, that new gifts continually come to the surface and are polished to a shine by the encouragement, love and support of one another.

There are people to thank as we look back at 2024:

- Simon, Gill and Emma – what fabulous colleagues. We have mentioned Simon's significant contribution already. Please keep Emma in your prayers as this is sadly her final two weeks with us, and thanks to Gill for being such a phenomenal gift to this parish – a jewel indeed.
- Nigel, Jane, Alethea and Colin – the 'wonder wardens' as I like to call them. They have worked so, so hard this past year without any complaint.
- All who have served on Synod and PCC, especially those who are stepping down this time – Felicity, Michael Guy, Henry, Emma, Claire and Tracy.
- Helen, our outstanding PCC Secretary, David, our treasure of a treasurer and Darren our very generous IE.
- Jan Johnson for stepping up to the challenge so well and working so hard, and Noel and Ben for their contributions to preaching.
- The wonderful retired clergy – David and Pam, Paul and John, Judith and also David K who has helped us on a Wednesday occasionally.
- Rob Bath and David Finnegan who support the wardens in managing the church hall, buildings and grounds
- Anne Saxon and the dedicated children's work team
- The talented musicians – Ruth, Andrew and the choristers, and Ian, Phil and their expanding band
- Baptism Information and support team – they have a bust summer ahead
- Compassionate prayer ministry team
- Those who read, prepare heartfelt intercessions and serve us at communion
- The Sunday coffee servers who boost our caffeine supplies
- The whole Saturday coffee morning team, especially Lynda and Ann who agreed to take over from Jean in leading that; the fabulous flower ladies; and the devoted community lunch team with their first class menus
- The sides-people, especially as we navigated returning to the communion rail!
- The green team and energy audit team (they should just be called the energy team as they have so much energy)
- The fabulously fun social committee
- The Little Fishes team, Thirst, Well-being Café, and Comfort Café for their outstanding care and compassion for our community
- The Monday First team - what a great new initiative with some hidden treasure surfacing
- The current Start course team and those who led our Lent courses so beautifully
- The kind and selfless pastoral and bereavement teams

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The efficient cleaners and gardening team • The youth teams who work with Emma across Ignite, Blaze, Pause and Youth Worship, for their energy and heart for young people • Small group leaders, especially Colin and Sarah, and also thank you to Penny who steps down as a leader after a few years of that ministry • Service leaders, including the wonderful sound desk saviours • And Ann, our highly competent and organised verger at weddings and funerals <p>Of course, naming certain people always leaves others out (which is a shame) so I do want to thank each and every one of you, including those that aren't here in person today. Every one of you makes a difference, even if you have only just joined our community. Each smile and every kind word counts. Whether you have been named or not you can be absolutely sure that God sees what you do and he will honour it even if I have forgotten to. I am so grateful to have walked through this past year alongside you, my precious friends in Christ, and I look forward to sharing this new chapter with you all.</p>
9	<p>Safeguarding Policy Approval –</p> <p>Laura confirmed that the meeting needed to vote to continue to delegate safeguarding policy responsibilities to the PCC.</p> <p>Proposed – Clive Davis Seconded – Jan Johnson All were in favour.</p> <p>Special thanks were offered to Gill Clarke, our Safeguarding Officer, for all her work in this most important area of church life, and Laura reminded the meeting that, not only must we show compliance from a legal point of view, with due control of our policies and behaviours, but that we want our churches to be happy and safe places. To achieve that safeguarding has to be the responsibility of everyone.</p>
10	<p>Any other business that may properly be discussed at this meeting –</p> <p>No other business was raised, but Jane Reichert gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the meeting to Laura, for all that she had done over the course of the past, exceptionally challenging, year.</p>
11	<p>Closing Prayer –</p> <p>Laura closed the meeting in prayer at 12.37pm.</p>

<p>PCC Meeting held immediately after APCM</p>	
<p>Present: Laura Martin, Jan Johnson, Jane Reichert, Nigel Thompson, Alethea Fry, Colin Ashurst, Val Carr, Clive Davis, Laura Beesley, Lynda Blyde, Noel Duke, Daffyd Pritchard, Will Martin and Anne Saxon</p> <p>In attendance: Helen Mayers (Secretary)</p> <p>A brief meeting of the PCC took place straight after the APCM to elect PCC officers as follows. (David Brown was unable to be present at the meeting but had already indicated his willingness to stand again as Treasurer):</p> <p>Treasurer - David Brown Proposed – Jan Johnson Seconded – Lynda Blyde All in favour</p> <p>Secretary - Helen Mayers Proposed – Jane Reichert Seconded – Val Carr All in favour</p> <p>Gill Clarke was also co-opted to the PCC as Parish Safeguarding Officer and bank signatory:</p> <p>Proposed – Anne Saxon Seconded – Clive Davis All in favour</p> <p>LM spoke briefly about the process for recruiting a new youth worker to replace Emma. She advised that any advert needed to stipulate both salary and contract term, and that PCC approval of a suggested period of 3 years was now required. There were no objections, and an initial 3 year period was therefore agreed.</p> <p>Clive Davis, on behalf of the PCC, thanked Laura Martin for her leadership over the past year.</p>	