

Parish of St Ebbe

with Holy Trinity and St Peter Le Bailey, Oxford

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

7:45pm 17th April 2024

(also on Zoom) **Agenda**

1. Introduction and Song
2. Bible Thought

Meeting of Parishioners

3. Election of Churchwardens

Official Business

4. Minutes of Annual Meeting on 26th April 2023
5. Formal reports
 - a. Electoral Roll
 - b. PCC
 - c. Fabric
 - d. Deanery Synod
 - e. Safeguarding
6. Presentation of Financial Statements
7. Appointment of Auditor
8. Elections to PCC
9. Elections to Deanery Synod

Church Culture

10. Building Healthier Church Culture Together

Church Planting

11. Headington
12. Cowley
13. Central

Looking Forward

14. St Ebbe's and the Church of England
15. Song
16. Prayer

Parish of St Ebbe with Holy Trinity and St Peter Le Bailey, Oxford Annual Reports 2023-24

Electoral Roll

Lorraine Andrews

Electoral Roll for St Ebbe's Central and Headington

Total in 2023 = 461

In 2023-2024, 42 people were added and 29 people removed.

Total in 2024 = 474

Mission Roll for Grace Church Cowley

Total in 2023 = 71

In 2023-2024, 9 people were added and 1 person removed.

Total in 2024 = 79

Parochial Church Council (PCC) Report

Tim Dossor

(A fuller account is given in the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2023 available at stebbes.org/apcm)

The PCC met three times during the year; Local committees (Central, Headington and Cowley) met more regularly in between meetings.

The following main topics were considered during the year. The PCC:

- Following on from the Internal Review, the Central Committee continued to Phase 2 looking at Healthier Church Culture. The Central Committee, staff and most small groups were consulted to identify areas of church culture were a cause for praise, and which areas needed further work and prayer. Four main areas were identified at the Annual Meeting in April: Welcome and Integration; Class and Diversity; Staff and Volunteering; Community and Mixing. Each of these would be addressed in turn at Central Committee meetings in the year ahead, including further opportunities for the church family to feed in.
- The sale of the Rectory to the Littlegate Trust was completed on 17th February 2023 and the diocese is actively looking for a suitable replacement in a residential area nearby.
- The PCC approved updates to its policies on Safeguarding, Health & Safety, Data Protection and Finance.
- A significant area of discussion was how to respond to the proposals put before General Synod concerning the blessing of same sex relationships. In response to the Bishop of Oxford's teaching and action in this area, the PCC decided to direct Parish Share to the Oxford Good Stewards Trust, some will be passed to the Diocese and a proportion will be redirected to support other orthodox ministry in the area of the diocese. In response to decisions made by General Synod in November, the PCC decided to distance itself from the Diocese financially in 2024 and

instead of paying Parish Share to pay the stipend of the Rector and Curate directly. A payment will be made to the Diocese towards the cost of safeguarding.

- As each of the sites approached capacity on Sundays (including for children's groups) an urgent topic the PCC considered was church planting. It decided to send Paul Bolton to lead a church plant from Headington to the east of Oxford in autumn 2024 (the plant would be part of the International Presbyterian Church), for Grace Church Cowley to appoint an Assistant Minister (subject to fundraising) to join Ben Vane with a view to strengthening the church and to begin explore a ministry that might reach people outside the ring road over time, possibly through to planting/grafting/leading a church there in the future.
- The PCC set up a new Remuneration Committee and reorganised committees, so committees associated with one of the bases reported to that local committee (e.g. UK Mission Group, Overseas Partners Support Group, Reach The Nations, Buildings Committee). It also formed the New Charity Committee to consider Headington becoming an independent charity managing the work in Headington.
- The PCC also concerned itself with staff appointments, finance, safeguarding appointments, other Church of England matters, and received regular reports from committees and congregation leaders.

Fabric Report

Greg Brisk and Suzanne Wilson-Higgins

At Central, further works were undertaken to resolve issues with the floor in the west end of the main church.

Deanery Synod

The Oxford Deanery stretches north as far as Kidlington; churches on the east side of Oxford are members of Cowley Deanery. The two deaneries meet together once a year. Anthony Buckley (Area Dean) and Prudence Dailey (Lay Chair) provide very fine leadership, and Prudence always gives a fair report back from meetings of General Synod. Speakers have been helpfully drawn in on a range of subjects which bear on local church life. A significant area of discussion has been around finance and how the Parish Share is assigned between parishes in the deanery.

St Ebbe's has seven places on Deanery Synod (6 from 2023), and we ensure that we are represented at all meetings, partly to contribute, but also to get to know members of other churches.

Deanery Synod members for 202-2024 have been Rahul Ravindran, Kate Randle, Greg Brisk, Suzanne Wilson-Higgins, Trevor Rayment, and David Sarjudeen. All clergy are also ex-officio members of Deanery Synod.

The PCC and Rector (as Chair of PCC), has oversight and ultimate responsibility for safeguarding at St Ebbe's (alongside the PCC's legal responsibility as Trustees).

The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) is responsible for overseeing safeguarding arrangements and ensure relevant guidelines are adhered to. The PSO supports the PCC and the Rector and gives independence (as someone who is not on staff or a member of clergy) to the system.

The safeguarding team is comprised as follows:

- A Parish/Church Safeguarding Officer (PSO) at each of our three bases: Alison Willis (at Central), Weena West (at Headington) and Kendra May (at Grace Church Cowley);
- Staff Safeguarding Leads (SSL) at each base. At Central, Lizzie Ling was replaced during the year by Toby Collins (U18s), Alyson Grove (Adults) and Tim Dossor (Safeguarding Committee Chair); at Headington, Paul Bolton; at Cowley, Ben Vane.
- A Safeguarding Administrator at each base Lorraine Andrews (C), Jill Gascoigne (H) and at Cowley safeguarding administration is done by the Church Safeguarding officer, Kendra May. They also deal with admin relating to Safe Recruitment of volunteers (including DBS administration).

In addition, a Safeguarding Committee operates, which comprises: Tim Dossor (Chair), the three PSOs and the SSLs. This meets once a term and has primary responsibility for ensuring that the PCC Safeguarding Policy is enacted in practise. It also provides an opportunity for the three sites to learn from one another and operate consistently.

In addition to the above, St Ebbe's works closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Give thanks to the Lord for how he has kept and protected us, as a church family, this last year. Looking forward, pray that St Ebbe's would be a place where we all flourish, growing into all God desires us to be. Pray that he'd use the safeguarding team, systems and practices to that end.

Questions ahead of the APCM 2024

Question: Given that the clergy of St Ebbe's have said they are unable to accept the spiritual oversight of the Bishop of Oxford, are there any alternative provisions in place?

Reply from Vaughan Roberts: The Church of England Evangelical Council (CEEC) has appointed a panel of Alternative Spiritual Overseers, who they have assigned to those who have said they cannot accept the spiritual oversight of their bishops on the grounds of their views on sexuality. Rod Thomas, the former Bishop of Maidstone, has been offered to all the clergy at St Ebbe's in this role. This is not a formal episcopal relationship, but he is able to offer spiritual support and encouragement.

Question: Please update progress on diocesan purchase of new rectory.

Reply from Tim Dossor: We are in regular discussion with the Diocese on the purchase of a suitable Rectory. We've looked in person with the diocese at two houses which were not suitable and continue both to search and discuss possibilities with the Diocesan Property & Land team.

Question: What is the vision for supporting women of City with no regular female staff presence?

Reply from Andrew Turnbull: Since Annabel Heywood's retirement last summer, staff resourcing was restructured to allow for a new Associate Minister for Roots role, allowing Andy Turnbull to step back from Roots leadership and focus fully on the growing City Congregation and Community Engagement works in the parish and wider city. However, this has meant no female staff regularly at City, as Annabel once was. The City leadership has sought to address this situation by explanation at an Autumn meeting of City women where they facilitated input on the experience of women in the congregation and brainstormed around their equipping and their mutual care of one another. Andy's pastoral support is available to everyone at City and women on the wider pastoral team of St Ebbe's are also available to meet up. There is another session for the women of City this Sunday to speak further and Vicky Neal (10am member) will be leading a seminar for the women of City this term. Lay women have also been empowered to lead the City service much more frequently. Whilst there are currently no plans for regular female staff presence at City, we are actively discovering the vision for what ministry by and for women at City will be most helpful.