

To be approved at the 2025 APCM

# Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Minutes of meeting held at 7.45pm on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024  
at St Ebbe's Church and via Video Link.

## Present

Around 200 people attended the meeting in person and others on Zoom.

## 1.&2. Introduction and Bible Thought

Al Horn spoke from Hebrews 13:8 and opened the meeting in prayer.

## Meeting of Parishioners

### 3. Election of Churchwardens

Suzanne Wilson-Higgins and Greg Brisk to continue serving in their roles and declared duly elected with no other nominations. Introductions were made by both.

## Official Business

### 4. Minutes of Annual Meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of last year's APCM.

### 5. Formal Reports

These were available online and paper copies were available.

- a. Electoral Roll
- b. PCC
- c. Fabric
- d. Deanery Synod
- e. Safeguarding

### 6. Presentation of Financial Statements

The accounts for St Ebbe's PCC have been audited. Trevor Rayment gave an overview of the finances of each base. Grace Church Cowley had a surplus at the end of 2023 due to an increase in regular giving, the funding is to be used to appoint a new Assistant

Minister. Headington had a surplus at the end of the year with a correction to where money that had been received in 2023 was attributed to 2022. This has been corrected and the surplus will be needed to undertake the plant. Central had a shortfall, due to a large gift that arrived in 2024 rather than in 2023 and unexpected expenditure. Trevor outlined that regular giving makes up two thirds of the income. Remember that all income is a gift from God. 85% of the expenditure is on “people” who are serving God and building up his people and proclaiming the gospel. 15% is spent on “things”. Trevor outlined who makes the decisions regarding money – each congregation has delegated responsibility. The finance team includes: Bev Adam and Helen Gerry (Central), Kirstie Quarshie/Liz Bance, Phil Cope (Headington), Sarah Bond (Cowley), Tim Dossor, Trevor Rayment (Central and all bases). Pray that the Lord would protect them in their work. Thank you to all those who have served and given, thank God for what He has generously given through the year. We look to the Lord to empower and provide. Praise God for His love and care.

Questions to go to church treasurers (contact details given on the screen).

#### 7. Appointment of Auditor

Greg Brisk presented that Wenn Townsend once again be appointed as auditors; this motion was proposed, seconded and the motion was carried unanimously by the meeting.

#### 8&9. Elections to Deanery Synod and PCC

David Parker is stepping down and was thanked.

Angus Fynes-Clinton, Peter Ridgeway, Andy Butterworth, Richard Brunt are joining respective committees having been elected. Jonathon Cook has been coopted onto the PCC for Grace Church Cowley.

No changes to Deanery Synod.

### Church Culture

#### 10. Building Healthier Church Culture Together

Suzanne Wilson-Higgins outlined:

Guidance from the CEEC covers 4 themes:

1. Character and accountability
2. Diversity and difference
3. Safeguarding and protection
4. Power and decision making

The outcome of the APCM workshop in 2022 highlighted 4 areas for review at Central:

1. Welcome and newcomers
2. Class and diversity
3. Staff and volunteering
4. Community and mixing

Staff have focussed on reviewing and implementing changes around points 1, 2 and 4 thus far.

Headington has sought to increase staff training around these matters, continuing the work of its cultural diversity group, Sunday teaching around diversity and equality, keeping issues current and building a greater awareness around staff appointments.

Grace Church Cowley carried out a survey around the CEEC and Central themes. A team of nominated volunteers analysed responses and shared the report with the church.

Next steps:

1. Community and belonging
2. Gospel handling and worship
3. Leadership and communication
4. Perception and image
5. Volunteering and serving

Discussions to be had around these themes.

Successful outcomes will look like a more united church family and a culture where questions can be asked freely.

## Church Planting

### 11. Headington

Paul Bolton explained that the hope is to plant Christchurch Headington in September in Quarry and Risinghurst and Barton and Sandhills. These councils are set to grow significantly due to development. Aims: to reach these communities with the gospel and to make space at St Ebbe's Headington for continued growth.

Give thanks for:

- A viable core group
- Monthly meetings
- Venue
- Charity registration and bank account

- Good relations with local church and community

Pray for:

- Financial provision
- Practical tasks
- Decision making

Unity

- Prepare people to receive the gospel
- Meet needs of St Ebbe's Headington
- The emotional cost

## 12. Cowley

Ben Vane gave thanks for the Lord's provision and the growth of Grace Church Cowley. The desire is to bless Blackbird Leys and Northfield Brook. These are diverse areas with higher levels of deprivation. James Weaver has been appointed to support Grace Church Cowley and looking to reach Blackbird Leys following approval of the PCC and the provision of funds. Pray that housing goes through and that schools are found for their children.

## 13. Central

Vaughan Roberts outlined the hope to plant to outer North Oxford in 2025, where there is a large, growing population and lots of new development. There are very few evangelical churches in this region. PCC looking for a local base on a development, with a regional reach. Initially this would maintain close links with central. Already approved by the PCC and discussions have started with local leaders and interested church members. The focus from summer 2024 is on fundraising (mainly externally), prayer and discussion with developers. Then look to recruit leadership in the Autumn, followed by gathering a team, identifying a venue, meetings for preparation and prayer and the launch.

## Looking Forward

### 14. St Ebbe's and the Church of England

Vaughan Roberts spoke on:

#### The current situation:

Nationally: Blessing for same-sex unions but no stand-alone services or same-sex marriage for clergy.

At St Ebbe's:

Ministry: clergy do not accept the spiritual oversight of the Bishop of Oxford, as sin is not a second order issue.

Finances: The PCC has stopped paying Parish Share to the diocese as there is a division and we cannot be in fellowship and support things that are significantly in error; we will cover our own costs and only support orthodox churches.

The PCC has taken on the costs of the rector and the curate and given to support safeguarding. Discussion will be had as to whether there is anything else we should be paying for.

The future:

CEEC and the Alliance – gathering and uniting Anglicans and evangelicals to stand for the truth and to resist error.

- Resist further steps
- Support the orthodox – appoint alternative spiritual overseers (not a formal episcopal role - cannot ordain), ordinands need a pipeline and bishop.
- Advocate for a settlement – need to find a way to have episcopal relationships that are orthodox and not in fellowship with the liberal bishops but still a part of the church of England. Currently the provision is inadequate.

Pray there would be a willingness to stick to theological principles.

God is the Lord of the Church; Christ made a promise – he will build his Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. The enemy loves false teaching and division, thank God for the unity of our churches. Pray that this would be preserved, that the Lord would protect and keep us, have mercy on the Church of England and prosper the cause of the gospel throughout the land.

Details of how to get regular bulletins from the CEEC to go into the newsletters across all three bases.

15. & 16. Song and Prayer

Vaughan thanked all for attending and the meeting ended with a song and praying the Grace.