

Minutes of the Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Saturday April 26th, 2025, held in Church House, Milborne Port.

The meetings opened with a prayer:

God our Creator and Redeemer,

help this Church to grow in holiness, unity, effectiveness and numbers.

Draw us closer to you and to those around us.

Give us enthusiasm in our faith, and wisdom in sharing it with young and old.

Open our eyes to new opportunities, our lips to sing and speak of you, and our hearts to welcome the stranger.

Grow your kingdom in us and in the world,

through the intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the power of the

Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The meeting was chaired by the Reverend Rona Stuart-Bourne, Priest in Charge. The meeting was preceded by the Meeting of Parishioners (see the minutes in the Vestry Book in Church Cupboard).

Those present: Rev. Rona Stuart-Bourne (RSB), Robin Bawtree, Harold Clarke (HC), Mary Clothier (MC), Patricia Dawson, Nicola Edwards (NE), David Grant (DG), Jacquie Hall, Des Isley, Reidun Sannes-Isley, Felicity John (FJ), Trevor John (TJ), David Johnson (DJ), Anne Johnson, Chris Lockyer, Shiela Lockyer, Richard Redman (RR), Graham Sharpless, Janice Sharpless, Clare Silk, Paul Springett (PS), Susan Wales (SW), Caroline Woodall, Frank Wright.

Apologies were received from: Anne Briggs, Tone Higgins (AH), Louisa Hughes (LH), Paddy Hunt, Amanda Mackintosh (AM), Linda Mumford, Lesley Oldham, Christine Porter, Tony Thorp, Naomi Thorp, Gillian Topp.

Minutes of the APCM April 20th. 2024: These were accepted and signed by RSB as a true record of the meeting with no amendments.

Matters Arising: There were no matters arising.

Reports:

- **Electoral Roll:** Graham Sharpless reported that, following revision of the Electoral Roll, there were now 121 parishioners listed, comprising 106 from Milborne Port. 6 from Milborne Wick, and 9 who were non-resident. RSB thanked Graham for maintaining this and for all the hard work that he has put in.
- **Church Warden's Annual Review:** Church Wardens' Annual Review: Both NE's and SW's annual Church Wardens' reports can be found in the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024 which had been distributed to parishioners by email prior to the meeting, and which will be

available on the Church's website. Paper copies were also available to those who required one.

- **Financial Report and Accounts:** (Figures have been rounded – see the Reports and Accounts for the Financial Year Ending 31/12/24 for exact figures and other information).

The 2024 accounts were prepared in accordance with the PCC accountability handbook.

An overview of the accounts, which were approved by the PCC on 15th March 2025, and independently examined by Alison Cooper of Charlton Accountancy Ltd, had been sent to all parishioners via email in advance of the meeting. The accounts will be submitted to Bath and Wells Diocesan Board of Finance in due course, in line with statutory requirements. PS stated that for 2025 there has been a £4000 uplift in the annual Parish Share for St Johns. PS implored everyone to adopt the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) as a means to make regular donations to the church, and to choose the option to index link annual increases in donations, which also aids forward planning. Graham Sharpless also reminded people that there was a link on the Benefice website to give regularly or as a one-off. The Benefice Parish Share had increased to £65,000 p.a. and the total within the next five years would be approximately £85,000. The methodology for working out Parish Share allocation has no correlation with the Electoral Role numbers, but is calculated on a number of factors including, for example, house prices in the area. DG requested that exactly how the Parish Share was now calculated should be looked at by someone in detail. The addition of the three new parishes would not significantly reduce any present parish share costs and details for the new Milborne Benefice's Parish Share will not be announced until mid-October. . RSB reiterated that as many people as possible enrol in the Parish Giving Scheme, and to ensure it is index linked to keep up with inflation. The 'Payaz' card reader giving machine, is beginning to show its potential to help increase donations. Also, the much evident QR code displayed in the church was also playing a considerable part in securing extra donations. PS stated it was a shame that donations on the card reader are anonymous, making it impossible to thank people for their generosity. RSB mentioned 'Legacy Giving', encouraging people to leave a bequest in their wills to St Johns. For ease, the Diocesan Synod has produced a worded codicil which can be added to a will without incurring extra legal fees.

RSB thanked PS for his hard work and commitment, and for Charlton Accountancy for their audit. The accounts were unanimously agreed and accepted. As Alison will not submit an invoice for her work, it was unanimously agreed to give 'thank you' gift vouchers in lieu.

- **Reports from Committees:** These were presented in booklet form, and available to read either on the website, or email or by hard copy. RSB thanked everyone who had contributed in any way. There were no questions.
- **Inventory and Logbook Terrier:** These had been checked and updated by NE and SW recently and were duly signed.

Report by the Priest-in-Charge: The APCM is a wonderful opportunity to thank people for making this gathering of a faith community possible. There are so many people to thank because there is so much work which goes on in this Benefice which goes towards building God's Kingdom here. You are, as I said last year, an outstandingly faithful group of Christians, and it is a real privilege to be part of your team. Thank you to Nicki and Sue who are unwavering in their practical and emotional and spiritual support to me, and their single-minded focus on the good of this parish. Thank you Paul as Treasurer who makes my life so much smoother than it could be – I particularly appreciate your trust and belief in me and what I'm trying to achieve, and this parish definitely appreciates your dedication. Thank you to Felicity who has taken on the admin heavy job of secretary so efficiently. We really do appreciate your hard work, and we couldn't do our jobs without you. Thank you to Ronnie and June, retired priests Brian, Frank, Diane, Jane and Stuart, the choir and Rachel (and Paul) for the beautiful music, and the Bell Ringing team for their

faithfulness in ringing out our faith to the village. Thank you to Linda and the Magazine team, Graham for the website, and Linda for the Facebook profile and posts. And thank you to all those who keep the show on the road – handing out books, filling in reading and intercessions rotas, serving at the altar, keeping the churchyard upkeep going, Church house, Serving Coffee and refreshments, Tuesday lunches, Lent Lunches, Foodshare, Helen as administrator. Apologies if you haven't been mentioned, but you can see there is no way I could do this alone! Now nearly 4 months through this year we are in a good place as a Church community – we have a team which is working hard on Project St John's – dealing with the roof, the heating and becoming more environmentally friendly while serving the community better. We are on the way towards starting a Toddler Group here in Church House on a Friday, and this will see some much-needed interface with the younger generation in MP. And the new Memory Lane Service began last weekend – a service for those with memory loss, to support them and their families. This will undoubtedly grow and extend our pastoral outreach to the area. One other new event is that I will be starting Julian meetings on a Tuesday afternoon from 4-5. I'm going to do this after my two-week holiday, but to prepare you – Julian of Norwich was an anchoress – she dedicated her life to prayer. A Julian meeting follows a very simple pattern of a reading of some sort, followed by silence of about 30-40 minutes, and then some music and prayers. Once a week we will grow into a community who meet to intentionally listen to what God is saying to us. Please ask if you have any questions. It will take place in Church. In our desire to open the Church up to the Community we are already an exciting part of activity within the village. With the Annual Christmas light switch on, Open the Book in the Schools, Tea and Christmas Carols at Ven House, engagement with the Spirit of Milborne Port, more connections with the Parish Council, this year we have added further involvement with the Clockspire Restaurant to this – they generously hosted two Marriage Preparation sessions, and a meeting of the Christmas Tree decorators. We are also so fortunate to have Rachel and the Sherborne Chamber Choir who performed for us in one of our new Churches (CP) and will hopefully be offering more opportunities to hear their beautiful singing during this coming year. So there is a great deal to be grateful for, and to work towards. Thank you for your support. **RSB**

- **Notifications:** SW reported that a group has been set up called "Project St. Johns" to explore ways of enabling major works to be carried out on the Church Buildings. The group includes RSB, PS, DG, NE, SW, Rachael Willetts (organist) and Chistine Tebbot (Bell Ringer) who both have experience in sourcing grants and have also been asked for their input. A questionnaire (QR code and link on Church Website) has been composed to explore peoples' views concerning the future of the church, both as a place of worship and as an historic building. Over 100 congregation members and villagers have so far contributed. Roofing works are needed on St.Johns, Goathill church and Church House. Jacquie Hall reported that half of Church Houses roof has been repaired, as has the dishwasher. Grants have been forthcoming from both the Parish Council and the Spirit of Milborne Port (SOMP). It is hoped to recoup some of these expences as Robert Hall has been able to mend the old dishwasher and they will sell it. JH had further news of Food Share which operates from Church House. Elaine Ennis-Bunt has resigned, and more help is needed. Currently they have about 40 mouths a week to feed, and this can rise to 60. Help is no longer forthcoming from Sherborne Food Bank. JH asked for contributions of food, cleaning and regular money contributions to continue and thanked the village Coop who provide much needed supplies.

- **Elections** Linda Mumford and Graham Sharpless have decided to step down from the PCC. This will leave just two representatives at the Deanery Synod, NE and HC. However, it is hoped that when Goathill finally merge with St. John's, Roger Cowley will stay on the synod, bringing the quota back to three representatives.
- **PCC Members:** Rev. Rona Stuart-Bourne (RSB) (Priest in Charge), Harold Clarke (HC), Mary Clothier (MC), Nicola Edwards (NE) (Churchwarden), David Grant (DG), Tone Higgins (AH), Louisa Hughes (LH), Trevor John (TJ), David Johnson (DJ), Amanda Mackintosh (AM) (Milborne Wick), Richard Redman (RR), Paul Springett (PS), Susan Wales (SW) (Churchwarden),

Sidespeople: Caroline Woodall, Will Redman, Gillian Topp, Anne Schreiber, Jenny Hill, Christine Porter, Anne Briggs and Margaret Barker Meetings of PCC: The first PCC meeting of the new year will be on at 10.a.m, Saturday 21st. June. (The earlier start is due to the SOMP Village Fete being on the same day) RS-B then thanked everyone for attending and their contribution to the meeting. The meeting closed at 4.00 pm.

Closing Prayer:

Go, wherever the Spirit leads. Go, not seeking comfort or
ease,
not clinging to your own desires, even the ones that feel most holy.
Go with a heart wide open, a soul laid bare in surrender,
given wholly to Christ and his call.
Place no boundaries on your trust,
for the One who sends you is faithful.
He has spoken; you are sent to build his Kingdom.
And now, may the blessing of God —
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — rest upon you, strengthen you,
and shine through you as you carry his love into the world.

Amen