

PARISH OF CIRENCESTER
St John Baptist | Holy Trinity | St Lawrence

Minutes of the Annual Vestry and Annual Parochial Church Meeting held at
Noon on Sunday 19th of April 2026 at St John Baptist

Present: Canon Graham Morris, Revd Luke Falvey, Nigel Robbins OBE (Parish Warden), plus 58 attendees.

1. **Welcome.** Canon Graham welcomed the annual meeting attendees, led us in prayer, and announced the exciting news that our Bellringers came in first place in the annual Croome Trophy competition the day before. The Annual Meeting passed their thoughts and congratulations for this wonderful and impressive achievement.

2. **Apologies.** Brian Bruton, Pippa Burgon, Roger Hester, Sybil Hester, Peter Holden, Benjamin Janes, Alan Jones, Claire Jones, Lynne Kerton, Phil Kerton, Anthony Millard, Lesley Millard, Dawn Miller, James Miller, Hilary Lawrence, Pauline Skinner, and Sheena Thomas.

Annual Vestry Meeting

3. **Approve minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting that was held on the 21st of May 2025.** As proposed by Revd Luke, and seconded by Ian Robertson the minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting held on 21 May 2025 were unanimously approved.

4. **Matters arising from the minutes.** There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. **The following resolution was considered and unanimously approved:**

As allowed by the Churchwardens Measure 2001, the parishioners of Cirencester with Watermoor and St Lawrence continue to resolve to set aside the general rule that a churchwarden may only serve for six successive terms of office.

6. **Election of Parish Churchwardens and Assistant Churchwardens.**

Prior to proceeding with Churchwarden elections and affirmation of appointments of Assistant Churchwardens, Revd Luke gave a huge thanks and expressed gratitude to Jill Wilkinson and Roger Hester for their service as Wardens at Holy Trinity Church. Canon Graham and the Annual Vestry Meeting echoed these sentiments.

Nominations for Parish Churchwarden were received from Nigel Robbins OBE and Pauline Samengo-Turner. They were unanimously elected for the one year term.

As proposed by Revd Luke and as seconded by Peter Cottey, the Annual Vestry meeting unanimously showed affirmation for the appointments of the very important role of Assistant Churchwardens and they are:

- Libby Ellis, Shaun Miles, and Genevieve Renshaw at Holy Trinity Church;
- Marg Austin and Penny Phillips at St Lawrence Church; and
- John Hobbs, Alistair Schell, Simon Smith and Ian Robertson at St John Baptist.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

7. Approve minutes of the APCM that was held on the 21st of May 2025 and the Special Parochial Church Meeting (SPCM) that was held on the 27th of July 2025. As proposed by Maggie Dennis and as seconded by Samantha Burt, the minutes of the APCM that was held on 21 May 2025 were unanimously approved. Also, as proposed by Claire Pearson and as seconded by Hugh Thomas, the minutes of the SPCM that was held on 27 July 2025 were unanimously approved. Canon Graham and Mark Dennis, Secretary, highlighted that a couple of typos were corrected from the previous versions of the minutes that were circulated prior to the meeting [spelling of a name corrected, and changing 'Council' to 'Committee' on SPCM minutes]

8. Matters arising from the minutes. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

9. Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending on 31 December 2025.

Peter Ewart, Chair of Finance Committee, reported that unfortunately we were not able to complete and approve accounts before the annual meeting but they should be completed soon. Once they are complete and the PCC has approved them, the *Annual Report and Unaudited Financial Statements for the year ending on 31 December 2025* will be published on the parish website, and a SPCM will be formally convened under Church Representation Rules (CRR) rule M13 to consider them.

In the interim, Peter reported that giving from the congregation has increased along with donations from visitors; however, maintenance continues to be a drain on resources with a likely deficit in the region of £80 000.

On a positive note, Peter briefed the annual meeting on the work that has commenced at St John Baptist to transform the wonderful church. The work includes the installation of 7 loos (2 each on the West and East sides of the South Porch, and 3 inside at St John Chapel), storage cupboards, and a servery. Additionally, castors have been installed on the oak pews to make them more portable. Consequently, in addition to community events, we should be able to use St John Baptist for more commercial events and much needed fundraising and hopefully turnaround the finances.

Canon Graham expressed his gratitude to Charles Woodd, the Treasurer; Peter and the Finance Committee for their work and appreciated their immense workload. Canon Graham also emphasised in addition to commercial events, the work on the Church will aid in our vision and mission of reaching out to bring others to the church and closer to God.

10. Electoral roll including a report on changes to the electoral roll since last meeting. Howard Gray, Electoral Roll Officer, reported that the updated Electoral Roll was currently 213 (8 names relating to marriages) and that there were 203 on the roll at the last APCM. [Subsequently, number corrected to 214 for APCM 2026]

11. Elect representatives of the laity to the PCC.

Canon Graham reminded the APCM that at APCM 2025, the following resolution was approved and current vacancies are based on this resolution coming into effect:

As allowed under Church Representation Rules (CRR), rule M15(9), it was resolved at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 21 May 2025 that the Parochial Church Council will be constituted with twelve elected members of the laity in lieu of using the criteria under CRR rule M15(8).

There were five vacancies to fill. The APCM received nomination applications from Pippa Burgon and Michael Ralston; and as proposed by Nigel Robbins and seconded by Mo Shepherd; Marg Austin, Shaun Miles and Penny Phillips were nominated as representatives of the laity to the PCC. The APCM unanimously approved their election.

Clair Jones, Jill Wilkinson and Christopher Woodhouse left their roles on the PCC — we are immensely grateful for their service and participation.

12. Elect representatives of the laity to the Deanery Synod. There were four vacancies to fill. The APCM received nomination applications from Paul Jones, Claire Pearson, and Genevieve Renshaw. Additionally, Ros Ivison was nominated at the APCM for another term. The APCM unanimously

approved their election [with Ros and Claire continuing on from their current term and then another three year term, and Genevieve and Paul filling casual vacancies until 30 June 2026, then commencing the new three year term].

Maggie Dennis decided not to seek another term, and we are very thankful for her service and enthusiastic input to the Deanery Synod work and deliberations.

13. Appoint a person who is not a member of the PCC to be the independent examiner or auditor of the PCC for a term of office ending at the conclusion of the next annual meeting.

Wenn Townsend was reappointed as the independent examiner.

14. Annual Year Book which includes a report of the proceedings of the Deanery Synod, the Annual Fabric Report and activities of the PCC and parish generally. Printed copies of the Annual Year Book were provided at the APCM and a copy remains available on the website [<https://cirenparish.co.uk/community-and-whats-on/parochial-church-council/>].

15. Vicar comments.

Canon Graham closed the meeting with much praise and gratitude for the support he received from his colleagues, churchwardens and parishioners during the eventful year; particularly, during his convalescent period.

Canon Graham began by reflecting on the period following Aileen Anderson's death, our late beloved Churchwarden. Although these events fall just outside the parochial year under review, he felt it was important to acknowledge the enormous contribution she made to this parish over so many years. He emphasised her dedication, care, and quiet strength which shaped so much of our shared life, and he mentioned that we remain deeply grateful for all she gave.

Canon Graham also took the opportunity to thank Nigel Robbins for the support he offered both to himself and to the parish during the unexpected gap created by Aileen's passing. He said: "We all recognise the profound impact Aileen had on the life of this parish, and we continue to give thanks for her ministry among us."

Canon Graham thanked his clergy colleagues and particularly Revd Luke's extraordinary leadership, ministry and pastoral care during his convalescent absence. He noted the generosity and commitment of non-stipend ministers and retired clergy. He also was much appreciative of the work of our paid staff, many volunteers, Extended Team, our groups, and our leaders who continue to serve faithfully and wholeheartedly and make ministry possible in the parish.

Canon Graham was pleased with some of the progress with buildings and projects. He stated: "The new pathway at St John Baptist has transformed the approach to the churchyard—our thanks to John Tiffney, Meg Blumsom and their team. The work toward toilets and a servery is moving forward well, thanks to Alan Jones, Peter Ewart, and all who have worked so hard on a very demanding process."

Furthermore, Canon Graham went on mention how our worship and music continue to flourish under Thomas Hawkes, and that we are grateful for his musicianship; and give thanks for all who support our liturgy and life together including choristers, servers, flower arrangers, bell ringers, vergers, stewards, guides, dust-busters, the gardening team and those who prepare our communications and online outreach.

Canon Graham stated: "At Holy Trinity, we appreciate the commitment that Ian and Ally make alongside Luke, and at St Lawrence, we have seen remarkable growth in numbers and confidence, my sincere thanks to Brian helping to nurture a real stirring of the Holy Spirit. Across the parish, from liturgies to lunches, concerts to study groups, pancake races to carol services, our buildings have been alive with fellowship and faith."

Though not the largest in number, Canon Graham also noted the loyal, steadfast, and welcoming nature of our congregations; and he highlighted that the ministry to families and young people—Seedlings, Little Angels, Sparklers, and Trinity Kids—brings such joy and hope for the future.

Canon Graham concluded with: "This is a busy parish with all of these activities and much more planned as we go forward. This simply would not be possible if it wasn't for those who offer their time to volunteer, thank you. Spreading the load is something that I am concerned to encourage as we go

forward, many hands make lighter work, and more volunteers makes the task less onerous. So as your Vicar, and on behalf of your Churchwardens, and your PCC thank you - to those on the front line and those who work quietly behind the scenes. It is an enormous privilege to serve here as your Vicar as together we serve the spiritual needs of this community. Thank you, each and every one of you."

The meeting finished with a prayer.