

With 54 people in attendance, the proceedings were opened at 6.30pm. After sung worship, David Baylor (Vicar), prayed.

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

This meeting opened at 6.40pm and was chaired by David Baylor, Vicar.

He offered thanks to Mary Ann Auckland and Ann Toley for their time as churchwardens over the last 5 and 3 years respectively. Gifts were given to both former churchwardens.

DB spoke about no new nominations for churchwardens. This gives us a time to stop and think about the role of churchwarden at St Stephen's and that it is important to not just rush to fill the posts.

Election of 2 Churchwardens

There were No nominations:

Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
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There being no nominations therefore no new churchwardens could be elected.

This first meeting closed at 6.51pm.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

David Baylor (Vicar) was Chair of this meeting which opened at 6.51pm.

1) Apologies

Apologies were received from the following: Tim Edwards, Valerie and Harry Harrigan, Ewen McKinnon, Barbara Luland, Andrew Whadcoat.

2) Minutes of Meeting held on Sunday 19th May 2024.

Proposal to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on Sunday 19th May 2024.

Proposed by Ann Toley; Seconded by John Anniss.

The meeting agreed unanimously. They were signed by Vicar as an accurate record of that meeting.

3) Matters Arising

None.

4) Report of Electoral Roll Officer

(verbal update provided by Morgen Edwards, Electoral Roll Officer)

Commented [DB1]: Not a content problem, but can the point number be de-italicised? I'm struggling to make this change in the online version of Word.

Commented [JM2R1]: Done

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At the 2024 meeting the Electoral Roll was 174. In 2025 the Electoral Roll was renewed, meaning all members were removed and were required to re-apply. After 34 removals and 12 additions our total is now 152.

5) Elections to the PCC

David thanked the Church Council, particularly those retiring: Xiaoe Li and Jen Whadcoat.

This year there were 3 full term vacancies to the PCC and 1 one-year vacancy to the Deanery Synod. The following people were proposed as new members of the PCC:

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded
Ian Jamieson	Pete Devereux	Linda Rivans
Ann Toley	Mary Ann Auckland	Jonathan Jones
Corinne Fitch	Morgen Edwards	Sara Pinto
Carmela Amodio-Johnson (Deanery Synod)	John Anniss	Sally Anniss

There being no other nominations, the above were declared elected to the PCC and Deanery Synod.

6) Report on Church Fabric, Goods and Ornaments

The Annual Report on the Church fabric, goods and ornaments, prepared by the Churchwardens, which had been approved at the last PCC meeting, was noted.

Since writing the report the PCC has approved the Car Park plan unanimously. No estimate yet for the costs of the works. Materials have been specified but a technical drawing still needs to be drawn up.

Thanks, given to the churchwardens for all their hard work.

7) Written Annual Church Report

The Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for the year ending 31st December 2024 was received and signed off by the PCC on Monday 12th May 2025. *The Annual Report* had already been agreed by the PCC and by the Independent Examiner (IE). Therefore, this meeting noted the report and received comments.

Comments:

A typo was noted on the income statement – Balances carried forward at 31 December 2023 should read 2024.

Thanks, given to Jane Maffett for all her hard work.

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8) Finance Report

2024 ended with a surplus of £9,000 (the previous year there was a surplus of £28,000 - £20,000 of which was put into a reserve account).

We budgeted a surplus of £5,000.

Expenditure

Mission Giving – ~ £39,000

Diocesan Fund – had initially proposed to give £103,000 but giving was down which often happens in a vacancy so £93,000 was agreed instead

General Spend – ~ £25,000

Staff – ~ £79,000 – first time fully staffed

Premises - £57,000 (£30,000 utilities, £27,000 maintenance costs)

Spent approximately £293,000 - £23,000 more than 2024.

Income (£302,000)

Major part of income is from Stewardship/Giving - £173,000
There were a few legacies and special donations
Lettings were up to £52,000
Interest income - £2,000
St Luke's - £40,000

Overall income up £5,000 on previous year and £4,000 more than budget but that hid a reduction in regular income of £20,000 including Gift Aid. This was due to various reasons.

All the above excludes any money spent on the Entrance Improvement Project (EIP) as this was covered by a grant from the St Luke's Trust.

Hall Lettings - have increased hugely since Jack Cahill started in 2022.

Reserves

General Reserves - can be spent on whatever we need
Restricted Reserves - must be spent on specified items - mainly from St Luke's with staffing costs

General Reserves are around £85,000
Maintenance Reserve and Special Projects Reserve £87,000

There are a number of big spends coming up - The Carpark, church projectors and the sliding doors in the main hall.

Our accounts have been moved to Lloyds Bank but we still have our Barclays account open.

Launched Parish Giving Scheme on a soft launch. Need to relaunch this now we have a new incumbent. 27 are currently signed up.

Thanks given to Chris and Helen Irwin-Childs, Giving Coordinators.

Thanks to the Finance Committee.

Thanks to those who count cash - Ann Toley and those who help.

9) Independent examiner

Our Independent Examiner, Val Steward, has been ill. JM suggested we may look for another IE but will liaise with Val Steward if she wants to continue.

Questions to JM

Q - We have in the past moved £20,000 to the maintenance fund why not done this year?

A - We would have like to have done this but we did not have the surplus funds. However we have moved the legacies and special donations to a designated fund this year.

Q - Why was there an adjustment of £3/4,000?

A - It was relating to a Maternity Leave a few years ago. The monies were sitting in the current statement as an asset as if the HMRC owed us money. That should have been used to cover national insurance. The net effect was that our salary bill reported that year was this amount lower than it should have been.

AT offered thanks to Jane Maffett.

Commented [DB3]: I'm asking the question because I don't recall who JR is! Do we need to highlight who asked these questions? If so, we might sensibly name them. Alternatively, and perhaps more simply, couldn't we just present them as Q: and A:?

Commented [JM4R3]: Changed

Commented [JM5R3]: It was Jonah

10) Vicar's Report

This was started by watching a video from the Bishop of London

DB Started at SSE in January 2025 so only been here 4 months. Time has flown and it feels a bit longer. The family have settled and are delighted to be here.

DB and family have hosted dinners at the Vicarage as a way of getting to know parishioners.

These will hopefully morph into Welcome evenings.

DB listed a number, if not all, of the teams we have at St Stephen's throughout the week/year.

Thanks to the congregation for using their gifts, skills and talents in our community and God.

Thanks to JM, MAA and AT but also to our staff team Morgen Edwards, Stephen Turner and Jack Cahill.

DB has been out to JAM and Youth as well as Shining Stars, noting how our midweek activities for children and youth connect with the wider community.

Thanks to Ruth Robinson, our Curate, who has been a great encouragement to DB and allowed him to step back to discern where God has been at work. RR and family will be hugely missed when they move on to Ruth's own parish.

The AGM is primarily a time to look back over the previous year and give thanks to God. This evening also gives us an opportunity to look forwards. No specific details as only been here four months. But DB offered a few thoughts:

- 1) Loves the Vision Statement he inherited – to be a Community Growing in the love of Jesus. DB sees no reason to change this but wants SSE to be confident in what that means for us. It should underpin all that we do.
- 2) All the makings of excellent intergenerational ministry. Not young or old but engage every generation. There is a resurgence in Young People in their faith in God. Challenge is to hold it all together. DB will not just focus on adult gatherings but ensure that children and young people are carried alongside and take active roles in all we do at SSE.
- 3) Important to learn from people to experience God in different ways. SSE is home to people of different Christian backgrounds. Promoting Christian Unity can take us out of our comfort zones - unity can be and is a glimpse of heaven. DB hopes to cultivate opportunities to learn from one another.

There is lots to figure out and as the weather improves DB invites the congregation to go out with him on prayer walks around the Parish. He hopes that in praying around the community that it will become clear where we as SSE should invest our time, talents and energy to play our part in the Diocesan Vision that every person in our Parish might encounter the love of God in Christ.

DB encouraged the meeting's attendees to talk to the people around them about what they have been encouraged by this evening and about what is to come.

Comments:

Exciting to have DB and family join SSE and the new sense of momentum.

See the engagement is good as more in attendance tonight than previously. Suggest the Holy Spirit is at work.

Encouraging to see how DB has noticed blind spots that we may have had in the past and made changes, particularly with services and children & young people.

We should be united in Christ and use our gifts for the benefit for the church and community.

Commented [DB6]: Looking back at my notes, the language I used was a little more passive. I wasn't so much inviting us to step out of our comfort zones (though I think it is important that we learn to do this) but rather saying that promoting Christian unity takes us out of our comfort zones.

Commented [JM7R6]: I have made changes

*Does DB have any ideas about uniting the two services as it can feel like two different services.
DB said not at the moment but he is thinking about it. DB has recently changed the 10:30am service to bring it more in line with how the gam service runs and also engaging the younger generations. Would like to think of us a one church with two expressions.*

Encouraged by the way DB has come with a careful step and taking his time before making changes.

Like the idea of the prayer walk.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 7:51pm.

Signed as record..... Date.....