**CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, ABINGTON**

**MINUTES OF PCC MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 7.45PM PARISH ROOMS**

**PRESENT:** Rev Byung Jun Kim, Rev Tracy Pegram, Bob Purser, Prester Coleman, Liz Kelly, Jim Mercer, Cathy Tinsley, Jane Evans, John Wishart, Andrew Munns, Donald Loe, Lizzie Loe, Suzy McKay, Dianne Ward, Douglas Rutherford, Sue Harrison, Esme Cushing, Damian Pickard, Melissa Tallack (minutes)

**41/24 OPENING PRAYERS AND DEVOTION**

The meeting opened in prayer.

**42/24 APOLOGIES:**

Alison Barnes, Chris Waters

**43/24 RECTOR’S WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS**

See under the Oak section.

 **44/24 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 1st MAY 2024**

Douglas proposed that the minutes were accepted, Liz seconded this and all present supported the proposal, subject to one typo correction; previous minutes being 6th March 2024 not 2023.

**45/24 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**46/24 CORRESPONDENCE**

AJ Mills on June Martin’s cremation tablet- the incorrect tablet has now been corrected and reinstated.

Foodbank - St. Alban’s have asked if we could consider supporting then once again this harvest, and everyone present supported this.

Helen Halson – we have been asked to consider taking a curate next year. Helen is currently a reader in Blisworth (Grand Union Benefice) and has been introduced to the leadership team. Jun has written to Helen today to offer her a curacy at St Peter and St Paul. Her ordination will be next July. Helen is married to James who is a PhD student.

Christmas Charity – Chosen People Ministries have written and asked for our support. We will select Christmas charities at the November meeting. The PCC were asked to bring any other suggestions to that meeting.

Harvest Charity – Christian Aid was proposed and supported by all present.

**47/24 SAFEGUARDING: AMENDED POLICY**

Esme outlined the main changes to the safeguarding policy: safeguarding officer details have been updated, as has the training section. Some additional wording has been included around transporting children and the removal of the need for business insurance and the requirement for comprehensive cover. Wording has been changed around the use of social media and the use of phones.

Damian proposed that the policy be approved, this was seconded by Andrew and was approved by all present.

The PCC thanked Esme for all her work and all who contributed.

In other safeguarding matters the PCC were informed that a DBS check will be arranged for the serving team now that we have young people on the team.

**48/24 TREASURERS REPORT**The numbers in the report circulated by Suzy are correct as up to this August.

Income is performing well due to better-than-expected income from the stewardship campaign, the fete, credit card donations and nursery rent income.

Expenses are under budget but spend is largely in the areas where we expected it to be.

The budget planning process for2025 has commenced.

**49/24 REVIEW OF THE LAST THREE MONTHS**We had some exceptional sermons during August. The immersion baptism service was very powerful. It was really encouraging to see so many candidates coming forward for confirmation. It was the largest number in decades. The butterflies have been fabulous (942 have been put up now by Suzy and Simon). People are now coming in especially to see the butterflies. We had over 200 attend the family fun day. Dianne thanked everyone for making the effort to dress up for the fete. The children being involved in all age services is great and is something that can grow and develop.

**50/24 UNDER THE OAK FOLLOW UP**

It was very enjoyable and inclusive and work is underway to understand what the next steps are. It was great to see how many people came and shared so fully. This was remarkable and rewarding to see. It was especially nice to see so many different people coming week in week out. The level of personal sharing was a really encouraging feature. It was good to see the parish rooms being use for such an occasion. Dianne commented that the name Under the Oak also helped attract new people into the conversation.

Jun’s reflection – it was interesting that we were doing this on the 800-year anniversary, so when we were designing it, we could have made it more task driven to come up with 2-3 plans and initiatives to communicate and implement. And that type of activity is good, with the aim to see the church grow. We do want to see the church grow, but we are growing already.

We talked about community and resources but what stood out for me was a lot of things that came up, we are doing already. The danger is perhaps not doing more but not appreciating what is already being done. Are we appreciating fully what we are doing and the fact that we are growing as a result? Yes, we are. Not because we have a brilliant plan, but we trusted that God has the plan, and we wanted to respond to that. And this is what Under the Oak should be about: how God is going to lead us in the next 800 years.

When we think about the church growing, it’s because we are all growing ourselves. Growth in your graciousness, your capacity to be generous, your willingness to offer what you have for the growth of the Kingdom. That is the church growing, it is us, we are growing.

The real treasures we gained through under the oak was the depth of conversation rooted in prayer and scripture and we gathered each time to talk about our hopes to see the kingdom grow. Some churches struggle to even talk about mission, but every week we gathered in large numbers, and this was encouraging. These experiences are far more important than any new plan or initiative.

We are at the crossroads of the next 800 years. It has taken 800 years to get where we are today.

Things that were unimaginable in the past are happening now, so what kind of seed is God telling us to sow? This is why we are running the sermon series on Kingdom Life. There are some clues, and they are summarised on the agenda. There was a common desire to feed people (physically, spiritually and emotionally). Please pray and think about what is it that God wants us to do here. There were several individuals who were really inspired around this.

Secondly, there was a greater desire to work with community, through the churchyard and art. Celia has expressed her desire to retire and reduce her commitment, so there are other possibilities that we can think about. If you are interested in art, perhaps this is something you can pray and think about.

It wasn’t the ideas that excited and encouraged me, it was the people who came. We would like to encourage more people and their gifts and be an instrument for them to realise their gifts. We enjoyed the space when we can be open and talk together and sometimes be vulnerable with each other.

One key theme we have been talking about is growing. In this modern world, if something is not growing, something is wrong. Growing takes a lot of energy but we also need rest and recharge. As we stand at this crossroads is it possible that God is telling us that maybe worry a bit less about what you might do next, or how much more you will do? Instead, appreciate and notice what is going on and take some time for reflection, rest and recharge. Please pray and ponder about this.

When Bishop Debbie came she reflected that something special is happening here in Abington. But what can we see at the heart of it all? Maybe we are in a season of harvest? Can we find ourselves rested enough to undertake the task God will give us in the next season?

Jun was invited to write a piece for the parish newsletter on the topic.

**51/24 WORSHIP PLAN**
New Sermon Series: Kingdom Life 15 Sep – 3 Nov (8 weeks)
Harvest and lunch: 6 October
Remembrance: 10 Nov
23rd November Bishop Andrew’s Choir
Celebration Concert: 1 Dec, 4 pm
Christingle: 8 Dec, 3 pm
St. Christopher’s Carol: Fri 20 Dec, 2.30 pm
Carol Service: 22 Dec, 6 pm
Crib Service: Tue, 24 Dec, 3 pm
Midnight Mass: Tue, 24 Dec, 11.30 pm with Park Avenue Methodist Church
Christmas Morning: Wed, 25 Dec, 10 am

**52/24 800TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST RECTOR OF ABINGTON**The icon needs anointing and June is thinking about when would be the best time to do that. We need to pay the iconographer and the sum was approved by the PCC.

Musical talents is on this weekend with the Mays and the Jones families.

Christians in the Middle East – the numbers signed up are not yet very good, so we really need to encourage more people to attend this Sunday. The PCC agreed to underwrite £200 donation to the charity if donations on the day are not sufficient.

Jane Evans has been working very hard on writing a book on the parish history and the list of contents has been shared. The PCC is very thankful to Jane for this and also for preparing the church history information leaflet, which many people have remarked upon. The budget needs to be approved. To print a 100 page book it would be £1,100 for 300 copies and help with designing the artwork on the cover would cost an additional £25. The cost price per book would therefore be £4 £10 was agreed as an appropriate price for a work of such quality.

**53/24 CHOIR LIGHTING UPDATE**

The buildings committee have sought a quote for lighting improvements in the choir area and the space between the lectern and pulpit. Two thirds of the cost was to do just the choir are. Sue was looking for a suitable legacy for her mum and, given her enjoyment of the music and the fact that she was an accomplished violinist who understood the importance of good lighting, Sue felt the choir lighting improvements would be a perfect legacy. The PCC would like to record their gratitude to Sue and her mum.

The Standing Committee recommendation was to just proceed with the choir lighting (the total cost was £4,234, with just the choir lighting costing £3,082. The PCC were in favour of completing both pieces of work on the basis that it would be cheaper to do both together than separate out the two jobs. This was proposed by Donald, seconded by Liz, and, whilst the vote was not unanimous, the majority of PCC members who were present approved the proposal.

**54/24 TREE FOR 800TH ANNIVERSARY**

Tree options have been provided and the PCC members were asked for approval for the cost, which will be between £600-1,000. The tree will be planted in the area to the left as you look at the church from the road. The species recommended by the Standing Committee was the Red Oak. Everyone was in favour of the proposal.

**55/24 WORKING TOGETHER WITH PARK AVENUE METHODIST CHURCH (PAM)**

A meeting has been held with PAM and they have really enjoyed our joint worship. They will come on every midnight mass and next year will come and worship with us on Ash weds and our patronal festival (29th June). They would like to invite us on to worship with them on the 5th January (Epiphany) and 21st September.

They propose a further joint leadership meeting with us on Friday 29th Nov 1pm at PAM.

**56/24 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MUSIC**

This position was proposed by Tim and approved by the PCC previously. There is no cost implication and the notice has been advertised. Paul Nathan (currently at Northampton High School) came forward. Paul is a very accomplished pianist and is currently learning the organ. He has lead choir practice and his DBS is in progress. More to follow as things develop. If you see Paul, please say hello.

**57/24 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Childrenand Youth meeting will be held next week.

Buildings – Andrew noted that we will need a resolution passed by the PCC to locate the icon, however it was decided unanimously by the PCC that it seems fitting for the icon to remain in the lady chapel on the altar.

The Lady chapel redecoration order has now been placed (this is being paid for fully by a donor). The PCC gave thanks to the donor.

Robinia tree on the east path – the plan is for Chris Water’s son in law (when he prunes the magnolia tree, the Robinia tree will be cutdown,. The conservation officer will be notified (this is in progress). In the meantime, the tree will be checked for any overhanging branches that need to be removed as a matter of priority.

Discipleship - last in the pilgrim series, please sign up.

Finance committee will meet as part of budget preparations.

**58/24 DATES FOR MEETINGS IN 2025**

SC:  29 Jan, 7 May, 2 July, 10 Sep, 19 Nov

PCC: 12 Feb, 21 May, (16 July, only if needed), 17 Sep, 3 Dec

**59/24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Matthew George has been offered to go to on a yearlong pre-training course for potential ordination candidates and this is in the preparation stage.

Sandra Francis has been discerning a calling to be a spiritual director and will commence training next Monday (two years course).

Please pray for both.

**60/24 FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**61/24** **DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS IN 2024**

SC: 6 Nov (all Wednesday at 7.45pm)
PCC: 27 Nov (all Wednesday at 7.45pm)

**THE MEETING FINISHED WITH THE GRACE**