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The Parish of Ludlow St Laurence

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 11.30am Sunday 11 May 2025 St Laurence's Church

MINUTES

Present: Dick Franks (PCC Lay Chair), Liz Gardner (Churchwarden), Lesley Harling (Churchwarden), 8 (eight) members of the PCC, 24 (twenty-four) members of the electoral roll, 1 (one) member of clergy

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from: Eric Griffiths, Wendy Griffiths, Val Hardwick, Angela Herrick, Hazel Noble, Jacqueline Turner, Mark Turner

2. Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2024 (18 May 2024)

The minutes were scrutinised and agreed to be a true record of proceedings. Resolution: That the minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 18 May 2024 be adopted; proposed – Ewart Carson; seconded – Stuart McLaren; agreed unanimously by show of hands. The Chair signed the minutes.

2. Matters arising from minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2024 (18 May 2024)

None

3. Rector's report

The meeting noted the Rector's report, submitted before Revd Preb Kelvin Price left Ludlow to take up the post of Rector of St Mary's Ross-on-Wye.

There were no questions.

4. Lay Pastoral Worker's report

The meeting noted the report from Lay Pastoral Worker (Paul Kemp). There were no questions arising from the report.

Claire Wilcox asked whether there would be an opportunity for Paul to give a face-to-face presentation to church members about his work.

5. Church Officers' reports

a. Churchwardens

The meeting noted the report from Churchwardens (Liz Gardner and Lesley Harling). There were no questions arising from the report.

b. Electoral Roll Officer

The meeting noted the report from the Electoral Roll Officer, Dick Franks, who confirmed that there were fewer names on the new roll but representation numbers (eg PCC and Deanery Synod members) were not affected. After this meeting he would approach those who had chosen not to join the new roll and those who had only recently been baptised, making them now eligible to join the electoral roll. There were no questions arising from the report.

c. PCC Secretary

The meeting noted the report from the PCC Secretary, Lesley Harling.

There were no questions arising from the report.

d. Safeguarding Officer

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The meeting noted the report from the Safeguarding Officer, Dick Franks. Lesley Harling thanked him for his dedicated work which had made St Laurence's an exemplary parish as regards safeguarding.

There were no questions arising from the report.

6. **Mission**

a. **Anna Chaplaincy report**

The meeting noted the report from Caroline Culley, Anna Chaplain.

There were no questions arising from the report.

b. **Arts @ St Laurence report**

The meeting noted the report from the Arts@StLaurence Committee.

There were no questions arising from the report.

c. **Bell ringing report**

The meeting noted the report from the Tower Secretary, Lesley Harling. She commented that the former Rector, Kelvin Price, had been very supportive of all ringing.

There were no questions arising from the report.

d. **Celtic Prayer report**

The meeting noted the report from Caroline Culley on the monthly Celtic Prayer service.

There were no questions arising from the report.

e. **Children and Young People's Group report**

The meeting noted the report from Sandi Burley. She commented that only one child regularly attended the 10am Sunday service although occasionally there were others. Lesley Harling proposed a vote of thanks to Sandi Burley for her dedicated work with and for children and young people.

There were no questions arising from the report.

f. **Church tours**

The meeting noted the report from Eric Griffiths. Since taking over responsibility for organising the tours Eric had set up new systems for booking and paying for group tours. In place of regular weekly tours during the summer months tours were now booked on an ad hoc basis. The Chair thanked Eric.

There were no questions arising from the report.

g. **Christian Aid report**

The meeting noted the report from the Christian Aid coordinator, Claire Wilcox, who was thanked for her dedicated work for Christian Aid over many years in particular organising coffee mornings and Lent Lunches, as well as special collections.

There were no questions arising from the report.

h. **Conservation Trust for St Laurence Ludlow report**

The Chair explained that the Trust had not submitted a report this year. The Trust had a new chair and a number of new trustees and was continuing to raise funds through events such as quizzes and church crawls. It had given the church grants for a number of unglamorous but necessary works on the fabric of the church such as defrassing and fitting new hood mouldings.

There were no questions arising from the report.

i. **Contemplation Group report**

The meeting noted the report and thanked Helen Blyth for hosting the group in her home over many years.

There were no questions arising from the report.

j. **Fairtrade report**

The meeting noted the report from Fairtrader Penny Bridstrup who stated that whilst the group was continuing with twice-monthly Sunday morning stalls, annual Big Brew and Fairtrade Fortnight, changes were anticipated in 2025.

There were no questions arising from the report.

k. Handbells report

The meeting noted the report from Sally Newman-Kidd. The Chair commended the ringers – it was not an easy skill to learn.

There were no questions arising from the report.

l. Langwasser

The meeting noted the report from Colin Weston who stressed that the link continued to be active. It had been good to have Pastor Jörg Gunsenheimer attend Kelvin's final service at St Laurence's.

There were no questions arising from the report.

m. Liturgy Committee report

The meeting noted the report from Dick Franks who explained that Licensed Lay Minister Caroline Culley would be chairing the Liturgy Committee during the vacancy.

There were no questions arising from the report.

n. Music

The meeting noted the report from Director of Music, Michael Oakley. The Chair commented that St Laurence's was very fortunate in its wonderful choir – they were much missed when they were not there. The standard of music in services was exceptional. He also praised the congregation for the way it was getting to grips with the Plainsong Mass in Lent and Advent

There were no questions arising from the report.

o. Outward Concern Group report

The meeting noted the report about the closure of the group. The Chair stressed that St Laurence's was still concerned with outward giving, would continue each year to donate sums equivalent to 10% of planned giving to three nominated charities and would continue to support the Train-a-Priest Tanzanian link.

There were no questions arising from the report.

p. Local Pastoral Visitors report

The meeting noted the report from Caroline Culley, Pastoral Care coordinator. the wo new visitors joined team

There were no questions arising from the report.

q. Volunteers report

The meeting noted the report from Lesley Harling, Volunteer coordinator who told the meeting that there were openings for more people to join the welcoming team.

There were no questions arising from the report.

r. Broadmill report

The meeting noted the report from Broadmill on the operation of the Shop at St Laurence and Icon Coffee. The Chair praised the atmosphere generated by the two businesses. When the coffee shop was full the feeling in the church was fantastic.

There were no questions arising from the report.

7. Fabric

a. Fabric committee report

The meeting noted the report from Stuart McLaren, Fabric Committee chair.

There were no questions arising from the report.

b. Friends of St Leonard's Churchyard report

The meeting noted the report from Nick Ford, Chair of the Friends.

There were no questions arising from the report.

8. Finance

a. Finance report

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The meeting noted the report from Peter Nield, Director of Finance. The Chair thanked him and commended him for the fantastic job he did keeping St Laurence's finances on an even keel. His 6-week forecast was invaluable.

There were no questions arising from the report.

b. 2024 Financial Accounts

The Chair presented the Independent Examiner's report for 2024.
There were no questions arising from the report.

c Appointment of Independent Examiners for 2025

The Chair invited the meeting to vote on Finance Manager Peter Nield's proposal, supported by the PCC, that Whittingham Riddell be reappointed as independent examiners for a further year. Proposed – Peter Nield, seconded – Liz Gardner, agreed unanimously by show of hands.

9. Deanery Synod report

a. No Deanery Synod report had been submitted.

b. Nomination for Deanery Synod representative

The Chair informed the meeting that one nomination had been received for a second Deanery Synod representative to join John Stocker: Mark Turner. Based on the number on the electoral roll St Laurence's was entitled to four Deanery Synod representatives so there was no need for an election.

10. Lay Membership of PCC

a. The Chair informed the meeting that Readers (Licensed Lay Ministers) could be ex-officio members of the PCC if a vote to that effect had been taken at an Annual Church Parochial Meeting. Caroline Culley had been a co-opted member of the PCC, was licensed as a Reader and was willing to continue to serve on the PCC. As an ex-officio member she would not be required to be nominated for election and would not occupy one of the 12 places allocated for lay members of the PCC.

The Chair invited the meeting to consider the resolution that: This APCM proposes that Caroline Culley, as a Reader for the Ludlow Benefice, be given a place as a lay member of the PCC of Ludlow – St Laurence without the need for a nomination to be elected; proposed Liz Gardner; seconded Jean Ferguson-Davie; agreed unanimously by show of hands.

b. The Chair confirmed that eight serving members were continuing in post:

Ewart Carson	Jean Ferguson Davie	Michael Davies	Richard Franks
Eric Griffiths	Stuart McLaren	Hilary Walters	Richard Wilkins

One nomination for a new member had been received:

Ian Marshall: proposed – Ewart Carson; seconded – Fay Carson

Since St Laurence was entitled to have 12 elected lay members there was no need for an election.

The new PCC would therefore comprise 14 members:

The Rector (when appointed and licensed), two churchwardens, nine elected lay members, one Deanery Synod representative and one Licensed Lay Minister

c. Claire Wilkins asked how many PCC members were present at the APCM. The Chair stated that the two churchwardens and nine of the ten elected or co-opted lay members were present. One had sent apologies for absence as he was on holiday

11. Open Forum

a. Carole Perrett stated that it was especially important to keep the church neat and tidy under current circumstances and to have CCTV to protect it

Peter Nield assured her that the question of external CCTV cameras had been investigated in some detail at the time of installation of the internal cameras. The church's insurers had pointed out several other issues to consider and it had been agreed not to install the,

b. Claire Wilcox asked about the matter of the town wall. The Chair explained that while the church did own the walls Ludlow Town Council (LTC) was responsible for maintaining, hence repairing, them. Ian Marshall confirmed that LTC was responsible on a legal basis. Negotiations

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had continued for 12 years, going round in circles. LTC had commissioned a report ('the Morton report') on the condition of the wall and options for restoring it but was not currently accepting responsibility for it. It would not be possible to secure external funding without a guarantee that a 'responsible body' would take on the future maintenance of the wall. The church had therefore concluded that the only way of breaking the impasse was to take legal action against LTC.

Round in circle in 12 years. Morton report. LTC trying to get out of it. LTC legal advice we don't think will work so faced with only possibility of taking legal action. It was impossible to say whether the composition of a newly elected council would change things.

- c. PN spoke briefly about the consequences of the recent vandalism which had resulted in broken windows in the Lady Chapel. He was sourcing quotes for the repairs. Insurance would probably not meet the threshold. Consideration was being given to fitting grilles (as on the stained glass) but this would be extremely expensive. He anticipated that scaffolding would be required for 2-3 weeks during repairs. This would be done at the same time as work on a previously identified fault on the Great West Window. The masons continued to work on the external stonework, defrassing loose material and replacing hood mouldings. The replacement stone would be in place by the end of 2025.
- d. Juliet Marshall commented on the very enjoyable recent 'Song of the Hill' event which had involved lots of children in a lovely informal performance. She felt it had not been very well publicised. Lesley Harling commented that it had been widely posted on social media. It was always hard to know whether to use traditional poster-based publicity or more modern on-line approaches

12. **Closing prayer**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 12.32pm with the Grace.