

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners  
and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of St Nicolas Church, Newbury (the “Church”)  
held at St Nicolas Hall on 6 May 2025 at 8.00pm**

**Present:** Rector (Rev Will Hunter Smart) (Chairman); Churchwarden (Rick Coward); Churchwarden (Madeline Norman); Lay Vice-Chair acting as Secretary (Phil Davis); and some 60 members of the Church family.

**Apologies:** Specific apologies had been received from Viv Staunton, Paul Mawdesley, Rosemary Freeman, Chris Phillip and Ian Gore and there were a number of other valued members of the Church family who could not be present for the meeting.

**ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS**

**1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING**

The Rector, as Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting, explaining the purpose of the meeting and the other meetings to be held during the evening. He then opened with a reading from Psalm 67, followed by a song and a prayer.

**2. ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS**

The Rector reported that Rick Coward and Madeline Norman had been nominated for the two churchwarden positions for the next year. The nominations had been received prior to the meeting and were in the appropriate form, duly proposed and seconded by persons entitled to attend the meeting and including statements signed Rick and Madeline respectively that they were willing to act as churchwardens and not disqualified from doing so.

There being no other nominations, Rick Coward and Madeline Norman were duly elected as churchwardens. The Rector expressed his thanks to Rick and Madeline for their commitment to serve the church in this vital role; and Tania Wolak prayed for them both.

There being no further business the Annual Meeting of Parishioners ended at 8.25pm.

**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the annual meeting had been received from Viv Staunton, Paul Mawdesley, Rosemary Freeman, Chris Phillip and Ian Gore and these were noted.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The Rector proposed that the minutes of the annual meeting held on 30 April 2024 be approved. These were duly approved and signed as a true record of the annual meeting. There were no matters arising from those minutes.

**3. ANNUAL REPORTS**

The following reports from the parochial church council (the “PCC”) to be presented to the meeting:

- (1) **PCC Annual Report.** The report for the year ending 31 December 2024 on the proceedings of the PCC and the parish generally was received by the meeting. The report and the PCC financial statements would be filed with the Diocesan Board of Finance and with the Charity Commission.
- (2) **Electoral Roll Report** Mandy Maskell, as the Electoral Roll Officer, gave a short electoral roll report to the meeting. A new Electoral Roll was required to be compiled every five years and Mandy

explained that this five-year renewal of the Electoral Roll had fallen this year. There were 260 on the new Electoral Roll and there were positive signs of growth in people showing their commitment to the Church.

The Rector then took the opportunity to remind the meeting of those from the Church family who had died over the past year and the meeting remembered them in a moment of silence.

- (3) **PCC Financial Statements** In the absence of the Treasurer (Ian Gore) the Rector presented the financial statements of the PCC for the year ending 31 December 2024, which had been independently examined by James Cowper Kreston, Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor and circulated with the papers for the meeting. The financial budget for 2024, which had been approved by the PCC, had also been circulated with the documents for the meeting.

The Rector thanked Ian Gore as Treasurer for his work since his appointment during the year and in particular thanked Sheila Moore for her ongoing tireless and dedicated service as the Financial Controller. He also noted with thanks the work of Shalini Phillip as Stewardship Secretary and the contribution of James Lancaster, the previous treasurer, and other members of the Finance Committee.

The Rector then gave a series of 'bullet points' on both the financial statements and the financial budget which had been prepared by the Treasurer in advance. The Rector asked for questions from the meeting on the financial statements and the budget and a question was asked relating to the finances for the Church Building Project which the Rector duly answered.

- (4) **Report of Parish Activities.** The booklet entitled "2024-2025 Report of Parish Activities" which it had been the Church's practice to produce for many years and which set out reports on all of the activities in the life of the Church was also received. The Rector thanked Elaine Canniffe and Libby Lake who had worked hard to produce the Report.

#### 4. ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

The Rector introduced the elections for and/or appointment to certain Church roles. All candidates nominated for such roles had been proposed and seconded in writing before the meeting in accordance with the appropriate procedure and in all respects fulfilled the qualification criteria required for such roles. No further candidates were nominated at the meeting.

- (1) **PCC.** There were three vacancies for a three-year term on the PCC and three candidates willing to serve for that term. As the number of candidates was not greater than the number of vacancies, Nigel Freeman, Steve Wolak and Tristan Davies were declared duly elected.
- (2) **Deanery Synod.** There were two casual vacancies for representatives of Deanery Synod until the next election of representatives in 2026 and one candidate, Mark Knight, was willing to serve for that term. As the number of candidates was not greater than the number of vacancies, Mark Knight was declared duly elected.
- (3) **Independent Examiners** The Rector proposed from the Chair that James Cowper Kreston be appointed for a term of office ending at the close of the next annual meeting. The meeting approved the proposal on a show of hands.

#### 5. RECTOR'S REPORT

The Rector then presented his Rector's Report, thanking the wardens for their loyal and dedicated service and the PCC for their support and guidance. The Rector also thanked the staff team for their support and hard work over the year. He noted that the staff team were servants supporting and enabling the Church. He felt the Church greatly benefitted from the gifts of the staff team and was



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grateful that the staff team was a united one. He also thanked Janice MacDonald and Geoff Sowden for their support and ministry and also Pam McKellen for her ongoing service.

The Rector continued his Report by saying that he believed that the Church was a vibrant and lively place at the present time. Numbers were showing an upward trend and the Christmas Carol Service and the Easter Day service had been particularly memorable occasions. This was part of a national trend where it seemed that there was a 'quiet revival' at work.

The Rector noted that a significant part of the current positive picture was the outworking of the Church's 2019 Vision process and referred to relevant sections from the vision document to illustrate this, noting that growth is not automatic or neat and comes from God who by His Spirit blows wherever he pleases.

The Rector then noted that growth does bring certain challenges and referred to some of these, such as the need to have sufficient space to accommodate higher numbers in children's work. He went on to observe that it would be appropriate before too long for the PCC to reconsider the vision and strategy of the Church in the light of the 'new season' in the Church's growth.

The Rector then asked for questions on his Report. Rick Coward took the opportunity to thank the Rector for his leadership of the Church throughout the previous year which was followed by a sustained round of applause.

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

**7. MEETING CLOSURE**

The Rector then ended the meeting with a further reading from Psalm 67 and after a period of prayer declared the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

**Signed**

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Rector