



# PCC Minutes, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024

To / Present	
1. Diane Backhouse (PCC Sec, PSO & SC)	8. Anne Rolfe (Warden & SC)
2. Adam Burns	9. Pamela Rushton
3. Lucy Falcus (Deanery Synod)	10. Ben Scott
4. Martin Howard	11. Chris Vass (Warden & SC)
5. Geoff Jowett (SC)	12. Margaret Vaughan (Deanery & Diocesan Synod)
6. Alexandra Lamond	13. Paul Wheeldon
7. Matt Levinsohn (Chair & SC)	

#	Agenda Items
	<p><b>Opening Reflection and Worship</b></p> <p>Chris Vass brought the reflection to PCC:</p> <p>It was during our excellent Vision Day a couple of weeks ago that somebody in the group Chris was in said they would like more discussion on Heaven in church. As Chris reflected on that, he said he would have to admit that heaven was something he rarely thought of, however, there are times when he feels heaven is close by. This can be during worship and prayer times, and it can be whilst cycling or walking in the hills.</p> <p>But what did Jesus say about Heaven? Jesus certainly acknowledged an after-death heaven existed, he devoted his preaching not to that of heaven, but to a Kingdom of Heaven that he said was here, and now, near at hand. In Mark 1:15 it states the principal message that Jesus brought to us was “The Good News of the Kingdom of Heaven’. D.L Moody, the American Evangelist, encourages us to find out as much as we can about Heaven. He writes:</p> <p>1. “Surely it is not wrong for us to think and talk about Heaven. I like to find out all I can about it. I expect to live there through all eternity. If I were going to dwell in any place in this country, if I were going to make it my home, I would inquire about its climate, about the neighbours. I would find out about everything, in fact, that I could learn concerning it. If soon you were going to emigrate, that is the way you would feel. Well, we are all going to emigrate in a very little while. We are going to spend eternity in another world. ... Is it not natural that we should look and listen and try to find out who is already there and what is the route to take?” And whilst D.L. Moody suggests we should explore as much as we can about heaven, it was Charles Spurgeon who said “That the more of heaven there is in our lives, the less of earth we shall covet.”</p> <p>Attempting to make our lives on earth like heaven by what we say and do would seem to be possible.</p> <p>Chris finished with prayer.</p> <p>Next Reflection and Prayers: Margaret Vaughan</p>
2.	<p><b>Apologies for absence, and declarations of interest</b></p> <p>a) Apologies had been received from: Simon Honeywell, Karen Killick, Guy Wingate</p> <p>b) Declarations of, Conflicts of Interest were recorded for:</p> <p>I. Matt Levinsohn as incumbent, his wife as an employee (Receptionist).</p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>II. Margaret – when discussing LLF/Parish Share as she is the Vice-Chair of Durham Diocese Board of Finance (DBF).</li> <li>III. Martin – when discussing LLF/Parish Share as he is an employee of DBF.</li> <li>IV. Adam – when discussing LLF/Parish Share as his wife is an employee of DBF.</li> </ul> <p>Matt reminded PCC of need for confidentiality of discussions and decisions made.</p>
3.	<p><b>Approval of minutes of the meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) PCC were asked if there were any comments, issues or concerns relating to the minutes taken at the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Diane asked PCC for a couple of clarifications to the minutes.</li> <li>b) PCC was asked to approve the minutes for January as a true record of proceedings. Matt proposed acceptance of the minutes: all in favour/1 abstention/none against. Motion carried. <b>(ACTION – Diane - to forward minutes to Shiromi).</b></li> </ul>
4.	<p><b>Matters arising and Chair's update</b></p> <p>Matt updated PCC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) It has been felt, and prophetic words have supported the idea, we are moving into a new season. Increased freedom in worship. Excitement about what God is doing and will do.</li> <li>b) Since last time we met we have had several new families and individuals join the church. Hopefully only the start.</li> <li>c) Alpha in Ukraine Café has begun. Lots of people taking part. Super exciting.</li> <li>d) The Church Vision Day had over a hundred people come along and felt like a great buy in. We will go on to think in a bit about what happens next (see item 6).</li> <li>e) Since last time in our deanery we met as a synod to look at discipleship. Matt led representatives through thinking about what a disciple is and how to help people grow as disciples. Matt shared a discipleship document that had been produced and he is going to write home group materials for the summer term on discipleship to go along with a sermon series on the Vision of the church which will also run in the summer term <b>(ACTION – Matt).</b></li> <li>f) In the wider deanery the Upper Skerne have now recruited and have a great new vicar. Vicars are meeting to work on the vision for the deanery which is likely to be around discipleship and telling our stories.</li> <li>g) The staff team have all been through appraisals and are doing well. There is a lot of excitement about recruiting the new children's and families' ministry leader. Interviews Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February. Matt asked for PCC's agreement to appoint a successful candidate and phone the rest subject to references. PCC discussed event of a salary query and start date being delayed and agreed Standing Committee would be referred to to the make final decision.</li> <li>h) Festival Teesside plans are starting to be made and Matt is waiting for Steve Sutton and the central team to tell us about the skate team and about assemblies before we plan in earnest.</li> <li>i) We held our second Discovery Church this year and have tried some new things. We tried sung worship with instruments for the first time which went down well. In addition we tried meeting in age groups which was well received and resulted in some deeper conversations.</li> </ul>
5.	<p><b>UPDATE: Welcome Report Recommendations</b></p> <p>Ben gave a summary of Welcome report he previously brought to PCC and set out four key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) People from within congregation to volunteer to walk new people through how Sunday services work and coffee: journey alongside <b>(ACTION – Matt + Ben).</b></li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) A Welcome desk in the hall manned by someone from the welcome team on a rota will be set up each Sunday for both services – visible point of contact (<b>ACTION – Ben + Welcome Team</b>).</li> <li>c) A focus on encouraging church community to gather informally, including in mixed generation groups.</li> <li>d) Developing interaction with young adults.</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>UPDATE: Vision Day Feedback</b>            Matt provided PCC with a summary of the vision day in documentation form which he intends to send out to the church family. Discussion followed (<b>ACTION – Matt</b>). The key question about a vision are who will do what differently?</p>
7.	<p><b>UPDATE: Church Camp (6 - 7<sup>th</sup> July)</b>            Matt discussed how we have already moved forward with the PCC's suggestion that we do not seek to subsidise the church camp – church announcements during the week. To make this work, we will be therefore using the smaller church which saves £500 and brings the bill to £2900. We have launched a pledge system and given people until the end of the month to pledge whatever they like so we can make a call on whether the camp can go ahead in it's current format. If it can't we will do a day event for this year.</p>
8.	<p><b>UPDATE: Financial</b>            Guy Wingate provided the following financial summary via email as he was unable to attend PCC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) We have started the year with our finances running close to budget.</li> <li>b) We have formally closed the separate building fund bank account that was originally set up for Reach Project. This reflects the fact that the work of Reach Project has effectively concluded. The residual money in Reach Project will be folded into our general unrestricted funds.</li> <li>c) The church accounts for 2023 have been submitted to an Independent Examiner for their review and endorsement in readiness for presentation at APCM in April (<b>ACTION – Guy</b>).</li> <li>d) Our energy provider had approached the church with a potential new energy contract. PCC was asked via email whether or not to enter into a new fixed rate energy contract which would end in 2028 that was twice the cost of our current contract which ends in August 2025. PCC agreed unanimously to wait and not enter into a new contract at this time.</li> </ul>
9.	<p><b>UPDATE: Safeguarding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Diane updated the PCC regarding safeguarding report sent out earlier, with no concerns reported this month. However, Diane raised a concern herself that some volunteers had not responded to any of the emails regarding safeguard training she had sent, therefore, may not renew training and we could potentially be allowing volunteers to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults without correct measures in place (<b>ACTION Diane + Matt</b>).</li> </ul>
10.	<p><b>UPDATE: Wardens</b>            Anne updated PCC regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Environmental Health Inspection took place Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February when the team were preparing the meal for Connect. It was very thorough and some useful suggestions were made and, thankfully, these suggestions did not prevent the team from achieving level 5 again (<b>ACTION – Kitchen Teams</b>).</li> <li>b) New vacuum has been purchased - it is a bit heavier than the previous one but is very effective.</li> <li>c) At the request of the Diocese (Martin) we completed a survey concerning the Centre Hall.</li> </ul>



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	<p>d) The Diocese have organised a Net Zero Carbon Workshop on the 29th February. As we are one of the top 20% highest emitting churches in our diocese we must attend to begin the process of creating our own net zero action plan. Margaret has very kindly agreed to attend on our behalf.</p> <p>e) Guy contacted the insurers and mentioned the organ cover. On reflection they said the £500k cover did look very high so we have reduced it to £100k as agreed at Standing Committee. Guy was pleased to report that this has reduced our premium by £300. He has now paid the annual charge so we are covered until end of February 2025.</p>
11.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>a) Matt thanked Guy and Margaret for reviewing and updating Data Protection Policy which will be sent out for reviewing by PCC (<b>ACTION – Diane</b>).</p> <p>b) APCM need last few reports sending for Diane to format prior to seeking PCC approval (<b>ACTION – Diane</b>).</p> <p>c) Diane is stepping down from PCC Secretary role after APCM in April therefore PCC will need to find a replacement (<b>ACTION – PCC</b>).</p> <p>d) Anyone on PCC deciding not to stand at APCM for another term to let Matt or the Wardens know (<b>ACTION – PCC</b>).</p> <p>e) PCC and Warden nomination forms will be brought to next PCC meeting (<b>ACTION – Diane</b>).</p> <p>f) Martin asked if anyone knew who is viewing livestream services – is it missional or same people viewing?</p>
-	<b>Close</b> - The meeting finished with prayer.
-	<b>Date of next PCC meeting</b> – 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7:30pm.