

ST. LEONARD'S CHURCH GLAPTHORN

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026, at 7 p.m. in Church

Annual Meeting of the Parishioners

Minutes

<b>Present:</b>	
Rev Stephen Webster (Chair)	Ursula Wide
Richard Stark	Stephen Dickenson
Brigitte Hilton	Tricia Newton
Penny Reading	Philip Hilton
Anne Cashmore	Sid Charlton
5 members of the congregation	

<b>1.</b>	<b>Opening Prayers:</b>  Prayers were led by Rev Stephen Webster.	<b>SW</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Apologies:</b>  Rev. Annabel Copeland, Tracey Kerr, Charles Wide, Louise Foote	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Election of Churchwarden:</b>  The Vicar and Sid both thanked Ursula Wide for her hard work over the past year. Ursula was willing to stand again for a further year. The Vicar added that there are two Churchwarden positions and so any other nominations for the vacancy would be most welcome. Ursula mentioned the positive benefits of having another Churchwarden to split the role with and discuss church matters. Proposed by Richard Stark and seconded by Tricia Newton with all present voting in favour of Ursula's appointment.	<b>All</b>

## Annual Parochial Church Meeting

### Minutes

1.	<b>Minutes of the APCM dated 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025:</b>  These were proposed as a true record by Philip Hilton and seconded by Ian Davidson. All present voted in favour of accepting the minutes and these were signed by Sid Charlton.	
2.	<b>Matters Arising:</b>  Nil	
3.	<b>Vicar's Report:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thank you to Ursula Wide and all of the PCC for their hard work in ensuring the effective running of the church, and to those who provide invaluable support in the background.</li><li>• There are a number of challenges facing the Church of England in general, and Glapthorn Church locally e.g. financial cost of roof repair. Financial challenges also exist at Diocesan level too, where there is a large budget deficit.</li><li>• That said, there are a number of encouraging signs and good news stories, to give us the energy to face these challenges. The Vicar started by reading Mark 6: 30-44 (the feeding of the five thousand), giving the example of when faced with an impossible task, we need to give what we have to God, and pray for the beginning of the answer. We need to be mindful of the challenges but also encouraged by what God is doing.</li><li>• Some examples of local good news:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 8 candidates for confirmation later in May, aged between 13 and early 40's.</li><li>- The numbers in Church e.g. last Sunday, 30 adults and 4 children</li><li>- The Teas and Toys afternoon, along with Teas and Cakes and Soup lunches – social events to bring people together and also about Mission i.e. Making connections with the community as we want people to come to faith too. We want the church to grow and for most people, this is a “journey”. The Vicar and congregation can't “make” someone Christian, but can welcome people, offer friendship and prayer and share their faith with someone else. It's a wonderful challenge with young people, seeing how we can incorporate them into the church – e.g. 4 children who regularly attend Glapthorn church; 50</li></ul></li></ul>	SW

	<p>teenagers signed up to do Chattabox ++ this summer; 3 young ordinands exploring their faith.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Churchwarden's Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ursula started her report with the significant and very encouraging news, that this year, average church attendance of adults has gone up on Sundays from 23.22 to 24.48, after a few years of slow decline. The number of children attending church has also risen markedly. This is all down to the very hard work, faithfulness and willingness to welcome newcomers, from our PCC and congregation, as well as the invaluable support, encouragement and interest of the Vicar and Associate Vicar. There are significant challenges ahead, in particular the re-roofing of the south aisle, and obtaining grants to help pay for this, but it does feel that St. Leonard's community is in good heart.</li> <li>• Ursula went on to pay a warm tribute to all members of the PCC who have helped in any way this year. She thanked Sid for being an efficient lay chair, and for organising with Helen, the annual Tear Fund Quiz (which is our big fund-raiser for an international charity) and the Ride 'n Stride which benefits St. Leonard's as well as other historic churches in Northamptonshire. She thanked Anne for being a hardworking, conscientious and sympathetic secretary and Richard for doing the accounts with skill, even when half a world away. Tracey was thanked for being an invaluable health and safety guru, and Penny for organising church decorations, and with Bernard, the Christmas crib, Christmas tree and Easter cross – which is our public statement of faith. Tricia was thanked for running the very successful social committee, which has been instrumental in producing a £7,000 surplus this year, every penny of which will be needed for the fabric of the church. Tricia and Pauline were also thanked for producing the excellent quarterly village Newsletter.</li> <li>• Ursula thanked Brigitte and Pauline for deputising for her as Churchwarden on occasions, and Brigitte and Philip for organising numerous events. Philip was thanked for being our Deanery Synod representative and keeping the community informed of church activities by email. The teas and soup events have been very successful, involving help and support from many of the PCC, and congregation - Stephen Dickenson was singled out for his faithful support of these events.</li> </ul>	<p>UW</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition, Ursula warmly thanked Brian Ashworth for playing the organ so well each Sunday, which adds immeasurably to the quality of our worship. Bernard was thanked for organising the rebuilding of part of the south churchyard wall too, and Pauline for all that she does in connection with the church, especially organising the successful 100 Club, as well as the mowing rota – thanks were given to all those on that rota, who keep the churchyard looking so neat, and to Sue Brewer for organising the coffee rota. Grateful thanks to all those who clean, decorate the church and do coffee after the services, as well as those who open and close the church each day – a sign that we are open to the world.</li> <li>• Thanks were given to Stephen and Annabel as well as our lay reader, Charles, for enabling us to have a weekly service at the same time each week – something that has died out in many rural parishes. We are also fortunate to have a very lively and participatory Pilgrims’ Group discussion on fifth Sundays, led by Charles, when serious issues of faith are discussed and all have a chance to take part.</li> <li>• A high point for the congregation this year was the opportunity to welcome Edgar Gardner into the church family at his baptism in February. Also baptised during the year was Teddy Craike Pickering. There was one wedding – David Wilkinson and Fiona Lamond, and one funeral – Mike Schofield. There have been several interments of ashes. Ursula asked everyone present to pass on the message to friends and neighbours that churchyard regulations do not allow plastic flowers and other miscellaneous objects around graves and all natural flowers should be removed when they wither. This keeps the churchyard looking tidy and helps those on the mowing rota.</li> <li>• Ursula ended her report by reiterating how rural parishes are still starved of funds that are rightfully theirs and she recommended the church hierarchy read Luke, chapter 12, verses 42-48 – the Parable of the Good Steward.</li> <li>• Sid thanked Ursula on behalf of the PCC for her hard work and enthusiasm, and also echoed her thanks to all PCC members, the congregation and the wider community who help and contribute to the church.</li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>Treasurer’s Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Richard made his financial report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025.</li> <li>• Introduction - This report provides a summary of the financial activities and position of the Parochial Church</li> </ul>	RS

	<p>Council (PCC) for the year ending 31 December 2025. It aims to offer transparency and insight into income, expenditure, and overall financial health, supporting the council's stewardship of church resources. The accounts for the year, showing an increase in cash balances from £36,320 at 1st Jan to £43,539 at year end, have been independently audited by a chartered accountant from which no issues have been raised. The accounts are now posted on the Church noticeboard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income - During the year, the PCC received income from a variety of sources: standing orders and donations, collections, parish giving, gift aid, as well as weddings and funerals. Additional fund raising came from quizzes, teas and a concert. The 100 Club continues to be a valuable source of support for the Church infrastructure, and our thanks to Pauline Davidson for running it.</li> <li>• Expenditure - Expenditure for the year included payments for church maintenance, utilities, parish share, and there was no exceptional expenditure.</li> <li>• Financial Position - At the end of the year, the PCC had an improved cash balance, with sufficient reserves to meet day-to-day expenditure (excluding major roof work). The council continues to monitor income and expenditure closely, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to support the church's activities. The increase in cash balances has enabled increasing the transfers to the 30-day notice account, earmarked for major roof repairs, so that this account had a year end balance of £14918. The Gift Aid refund application will be submitted shortly.</li> <li>• Conclusion - The PCC remains committed to financial responsibility and transparency. We thank all parishioners and supporters for their contributions throughout the year, and thanks also to Mike Newton for collecting collection monies and summarizing the sources of income. Any queries regarding this report or the church's finances are welcome.</li> <li>• It was agreed that we will seek to appoint an Independent Examiner for 2026/27 – Ursula will ask Carrie Ann Gates again.</li> </ul>	<b>Ursula</b>
6.	<p><b>School Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The clergy continue to take a weekly assembly in Glapthorn School.</li> <li>• A number of services are now held by the school in Church, and are well attended – Christingle, Carols, Easter, End of Year, and Harvest services.</li> </ul>	<b>SW</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PCC continues to fund the giving of a Bible to each Reception Class child.</li> <li>• The Vicar ended this report by saying that the school is always looking for e.g. adults to volunteer with helping children to read, and this is always a good way to continue building connections between the church and the school.</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Fund Raising/Social Committee Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Church Social and Fundraising Committee was reinstated last summer after a gap of a few years, although the Church PCC members had continued to run various events in the interim.</li> <li>• The new committee was set up with two important aims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to initiate events where anyone in the village could meet up for a chat with friends, and particularly to welcome newcomers to the village whether on their own or with a family.</li> <li>- to raise important funds for the upkeep of the church building, in addition to any grants received.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The new committee is chaired by Tricia Newton and along with three other PCC members and four, eventually five members of the congregation, held an inaugural meeting in September. However, during that summer the PCC started Tea, Cake and Chat every Tuesday afternoon in church and this proved to be very successful. Although not a money making exercise – this was a “social” event – quite a large amount of money was received from donations and those who came were very appreciative. As autumn arrived, the format was changed to provide soups and bread at lunchtime instead.</li> <li>• The first major event organized by the new committee, was a Music Quiz in the Village Hall on 1<sup>st</sup> November, hosted by one of the committee members – Stephen Dickenson. This new type of quiz format proved popular, and a healthy amount of money was raised.</li> <li>• In December, a Christmas workshop was held, run by Sonia Ashleigh-Cross, where participants created beautiful Christmas table decorations.</li> <li>• In March, Pauline and the team organized Teas, Toys and Cakes afternoon in the Village Hall for families with children. Again, this was not a money making</li> </ul>	PN

	<p>event, but those attending were generous with their donations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On 25<sup>th</sup> March there was an extremely successful Bridge Drive in the Village Hall, which will be repeated. “Posh” afternoon tea with all the trimmings was provided (likened to what is served at The Savoy!) and a very healthy amount of money was raised.</li> <li>• In addition, church funds were also raised with Bluebell Teas last May, a beautiful concert provided by Liz Williams and Nene Voices in September, the annual Ride ‘n Stride event, the Harvest service auction of produce and the raffle at the Tear Fund Quiz in November.</li> <li>• The next major event will be in July, watch this space.</li> <li>• Tricia thanked all of her committee for their support and hard work – Brigitte, Pauline, Penny, Sue, Nerissa, Helen, Steve and Jane.</li> </ul>	
8.	<p><b>Deanery Synod Report:</b> Philip made his report. Presentations, reports and discussions during the year included the following.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Diocese Governance Review</i> Some of the committees and Diocesan boards are to be merged; the large operating loss is being addressed including selling off un-needed clergy housing and reviewing staffing and the parish share system; strategies for rural ministry and town churches were identified and are to be actioned.</li> <li>2. <i>Diocese Rural Forum (September 2025)</i> Topics covered included:  Consolidation (larger benefices rather than fewer buildings); bigger churches resourcing smaller churches with shared resources;  Using buildings for other things as well as worship; Strengths of rural church: community, environment and history;  Clergy training for rural ministry;</li> </ol>	PH

Learning from urban mission; tapping into spiritual hunger, inspiring worship, reaching the younger generation, encouraging generosity, nurturing prayer.

“We need to learn to use the wheels we have got instead of reinventing them!”.

3. *Mission and Pastoral Committee*

In preparation for making a Deanery Plan, The Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee, focussing on ministry and mission, looked to capture the ideas of parishes as to how the Deanery could be better organised and operated. “We need to know where we are now and to have ideas about where we might want to go.” A questionnaire was devised, for completion by PCC’s (due by Whitsun 2026). This covered current status (positive and negative features) and ideas and preferences for future development.

4. *The Welcoming Church*

Parishes exchanged information on how they sought to welcome a wider range of people into church and ideas about how their activities with this aim might be extended.

5. *General Synod Report*

The question of Church Commissioners providing money for parishes was discussed, but it was not known how our representatives had voted as this information was not made public. There was a debate on whether this information could be obtained as it was felt that this was important and church members were entitled to know.

6. *Anna Chaplaincy*

There was a presentation from Louise Foote, the Anna Chaplain at St Peter’s.

The Anna Chaplaincy, an ecumenical organisation and part of the Bible Reading Fellowship, ministers to older people of strong, little or no faith. Anna Chaplains seek to deliver sensitive spiritual care in diverse contexts: to those living alone, in supported accommodation and in retirement and care homes; they also work in “dementia cafes”. Those who have a vocation to be Anna Chaplains can be lay people or ordained, and are male and female, mostly unpaid. They are attached to and supported by local churches.

9.	<p><b>Safeguarding Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PCC has complied with its duty to have ‘due regard’ to the House of Bishops’ Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance.</li> <li>• During 2025 the Benefice Safeguarding Team comprised Revd Annabel Copeland (Clergy Safeguarding Lead) and Louise Foote (Benefice Safeguarding Officer based at Oundle St Peter’s), our PCC safeguarding link with the Benefice Team is Sid Charlton.</li> <li>• In line with the Church of England’s safeguarding policy statement ‘Promoting a Safer Church’ the Diocese of Peterborough provides access to an online application called ‘Safeguarding Dashboards’ to enable parishes to produce a safeguarding Action Plan. The Benefice Safeguarding Officer has used the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard tool throughout the year to audit and inform safeguarding practice and identify training needs. The PCC has worked through the action plans produced by the dashboard over the year and will continue to respond to any updates through 2026. The Dashboard has 3 levels, St Leonard’s has maintained its position at level 3.</li> <li>• The PCC have continued to use the Benefice Safeguarding Policy which was written in line with the House of Bishops’ Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. Safeguarding concerns will be responded as described in this policy which continue to be reviewed annually.</li> <li>• Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at all PCC meetings. As a church we remain committed to vigilance around raising concerns regarding safeguarding, responding well in line with Church of England guidance to victims and survivors of abuse, and being up to date with our safeguarding actions.</li> <li>• The Vicar said that Louise thanked those who were doing their training and DBS applications – the latter is quite complex and Louise has shared some guideline with Sid, if it would help any of the PCC to review these.</li> </ul>	LF
10.	<p><b>Health and Safety Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been no recorded accidents throughout the year. An accident book and updated reporting procedures are now in place.</li> <li>• There have been some minor repairs to the church floor in places, to prevent any trip hazards.</li> <li>• Ursula thanked Tracey for her hard work and commitment in this area.</li> </ul>	TK

11.	<p><b>Election of PCC members:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracey Kerr has decided to step down from the PCC – she will still help on health and safety matters but a member of the PCC will need to take a lead role on this too. Again, Tracey was thanked for all she has done on the PCC and in the Health and Safety role over a number of years.</li> <li>• All other members are happy to continue in post and this was proposed en masse by Ursula, seconded by Bernard Reading and agreed by all present.</li> <li>• Philip Hilton was proposed as Deanery Synod Representative for the next three years by Penny. This was seconded by Brigitte and agreed by all present.</li> </ul>	
12.	<p><b>Electoral Roll:</b></p> <p>There are currently 42 members., an increase of 3 on last year. The full list of names will be held by the Electoral Roll Officer and the Churchwarden, with the number being published on the church gate noticeboard.</p>	PN
13.	<p><b>Any Other Business:</b></p> <p>Penny Reading thanked the Vicar and all present for the quality and commitment around services, particularly the most recent service which had been a very uplifting occasion.</p>	
14.	<p><b>Date of 2027 Annual Parishioners' Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting:</b></p> <p>Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2027 at 7 p.m. in Church.</p> <p>The meeting closed with prayer, at 20.00</p>	

ST. LEONARD'S CHURCH GLAPTHORN

Minutes of Parochial Church Council Meeting

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 7 p.m. in Church

Agenda Item	Content	Who
04/26.27	<p><b>Election of PCC Officers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lay Chair – Sid Charlton (proposed by Penny Redding, seconded by Ursula Wide)</li><li>• Treasurer – Richard Stark (proposed by Brigitte Hilton, seconded by Penny Redding)</li><li>• Secretary – Anne Cashmore (proposed by Ursula Wide, seconded by Tricia Newton)</li><li>• Gift Aid Officer – Mike Newton (proposed by Anne Cashmore, seconded by Ursula Wide)</li><li>• Electoral Roll Officer – Tricia Newton (proposed by Anne Cashmore, seconded by Ursula Wide)</li><li>• Sid Charlton to also be Safeguarding link and the PCC member lead on Health and Safety issues, liaising with Tracey Kerr – proposed by Richard Stark, seconded by Anne Cashmore</li></ul> <p>All present voted in favour of these appointments.</p>	
	<p>The next PCC meeting will be on <b><u>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2026 at 7.00 p.m. in Church.</u></b></p> <p>The meeting closed at 20.10</p>	