

Trinity Church Meeting

Sunday 27th September 2026

Present: Revd. Georgina Bondzi-Simpson (Chair), Caroline Atkin (Minutes), Ian Brawn, Lindsay Busby, Val Dalby, Ruth Dams, Barbara Deakin, Alastair Fear, Judith Fear, Chris Foskett, Sarah Gibson, Carolyn Hawkes, Sue Kyffin, Tom Kyffin, Margaret Langsford, Neil Oastler, Judith Payne, David Perrow, Leif Rasmussen, Petronella Rasmussen, Rosemary Richards, Lynnette Seymour-Jackson, Ruth Sillitoe, Sophie Thickett, Heather Townsend, Stuart Townsend

Anne Matthews – Circuit Steward

Apologies for absence: Rebecca Brawn, Tricia Cook, Griff Fellows, Scilla Fellows, Margaret Greaney, Rev. Wayne Hawkins, Clare James, Rev. Pauline Main, Linda Msonthi, Elizabeth Oastler, Nigel Payne

1. Approval of the minutes of 17 June 2026

The minutes were approved and signed by Georgina.

2. Matters Arising

None.

3. Notification of Any Other Business

None.

4. Finance

Tom Kyffin delivered his financial report.

Despite the previous forecast for a deficit of £25,000, the actual deficit is £10,700. This is a lot better than anticipated, though we are still using our reserves.

Income for the year: £100,839. Freewill giving has risen by an average of 8%, so Gift Aid has also increased. This is our main source of income. Income from lettings has been steadily rising since Covid. Interest rates are up.

Expenditure for the year: £111,547. The Circuit Assessment is 12% lower than last year, which is good news. Maintenance costs have been lower during this past year, in anticipation of the roofing work to come. Neil has arranged a larger excess on our insurance policy, resulting in a lower premium. Utilities costs have been approximately £1000 more than the previous year, which is a concern for the future. This year, our income has increased by approximately £7000 while our expenditure has decreased by around £7000. Over the past 15 years, Trinity is averaging a deficit of £10,000 per year. With Unrestricted Reserves and Investments totalling £93,200, these reserves may only last another nine years. Georgina requested that we give thought and prayer to this. Restricted Funds: £210,000.

Roofing fund: As of 31 August 2026, this stood at £22,067.87, with more received since and Gift Aid to come. It is expected that the target will be reached and any excess funds will be used to alleviate damage caused by the roof problems.

A question was asked as to whether Christ's Hospital contribute to the maintenance of Church buildings. The answer to this is that they do not and under the terms of our lease, Trinity is responsible for the buildings and their maintenance.

On behalf of Trinity, Georgina thanked Tom for all his hard work with the finances. With a view to succession planning, if anyone would like to work with Tom, with a view to taking over the role in the future, please speak with Tom or Georgina.

5. Property

Roofing: options and quotations for work have been obtained. The Trustees chose the intermediate option that includes repair work and future-proofing for the next 10 years. The initial estimate: £23,000. Much of the problem has been caused by the proximity of trees. Abingdon School has agreed to carry out and pay for remedial work to two of their trees. As it is a Conservation Area, Neil explained that an application for further tree work has been submitted to VOWHDC and Trinity is awaiting the response. Water ingress and damp have resulted in a need for some plasterwork and decorating repairs once the problems have been addressed.

Action: A motion was proposed by Neil and seconded by David Perrow that the Church accept the Property Committee's plan of action and that MLJ Roofing is contracted to carry out the roof repairs. A vote was conducted and the motion carried with no votes against and no abstentions.

Neil expressed gratitude for the tremendous response by Trinity members to the roofing appeal. Georgina added her thanks.

The Property Committee is planning a walk around to identify any other minor maintenance issues ahead of the 5-Year Inspection which is due in Jan/Feb 2027.

Church carpet: Trinity has received a very generous anonymous offer to replace the carpet tiles in the church and also to replace the kitchen carpet with vinyl flooring.

Action: A motion was proposed and seconded that the Church accept this offer to replace the flooring in the church and the church kitchen. A vote was conducted and the motion carried with no votes against and one abstention.

David requested that any existing tiles in good condition be reused/recycled and it was agreed that this would be the aim.

On behalf of Trinity, Georgina thanked the anonymous donor. She also thanked Neil and the Property Committee for their work.

6. Conversations on the Work of God

a) Growth Action Plan (GAP)

Georgina thanked everyone for their work on this. One of the actions on the GAP is to begin Messy Church with a Messy Christingle on 19 December, 4-6pm. Reverend Wayne will lead on Messy Church in the first instance, but there is a need for people in different roles for Messy Church (Catering team, Welcomer, Craft table leader, Celebration leader, Co-ordinator).

Please let Wayne, Georgina, the Stewards or Eluned know if you are interested. The meeting was asked to pray for this new ministry and way of doing church.

b) Toddlers

Georgina thanked the team for all that they are doing to keep Toddlers going. Toddlers will meet monthly, rather than weekly, until December. The Trustees wish to recruit a leader for Toddlers. District funding, if approved by all parties, could mean Trinity, the Circuit and the District, each paying one third.

Following questions raised, it was clarified that the maximum amount of money required would be approximately £18,000 and Trinity's third would come from the Belcher Trust.

Action: A motion was proposed and seconded that the Church apply for a District Grant to recruit a leader for Toddlers and Messy Church. A vote was conducted and the motion carried with no votes against and no abstentions.

Georgina asked that we pray for Toddlers, the funding, the recruitment process and for the correct person to be recruited.

c) Christmas Lunch

Peachcroft has found that demand for their Christmas Day lunch for the those alone and in need, is outstripping their ability to supply, so has approached Trinity about this. Options were outlined and discussed. Options: One Christmas Day lunch event but in two venues; Trinity Christmas Day lunch standing independently of Peachcroft and

Friends from Trinity volunteer this year and join the planning group with the aim to be a second Christmas Day lunch venue in 2027.

Those present felt that we could not provide a similar service this Christmas.

Action: It was proposed that Trinity discusses this with the CiA (through Scilla) and the Vineyard Church (via Alastair). Any feedback to be received at our next Church Meeting.

d) Extended Communion

The Circuit will be approaching each church about possibly sending out blessed bread and wine after Communion services to members of our congregation who are unable to attend. It was suggested today that those in care homes could be considered. Georgina asked for our thoughts and prayers on this. More details to come.

e) Art Exhibition

There is a Circuit initiative to host part of the Methodist Modern Art Collection in Wallingford in May. Churches are being encouraged to consider supporting schools with coach hire costs to enable them to attend.

7. Circuit Steward's Report

Anne Matthews reported on what a fantastic job Jane is doing in her role as administrator.

In August 2028, Reverend Bruce is stepping down. The process of replacing him will begin in May, but Anne noted that there is a deficit of ministers.

Going for Growth initiative: the Circuit is looking at the plans from the seven churches with a view to supporting them.

A District Digital Officer is being consulted for support in the circuit. Trinity is invited to think of how we may benefit from this support.

Anne expressed thanks to the Circuit Team for assisting with the sale of two manses and mentioned that the future of Childrey church is under discussion, now that it is no longer in use.

We are asked to pray for the Circuit Stewards and for a future replacement for Anne.

[Post-Meeting Addendum: At the Circuit Meeting held on 29 September, Revd John Anderson informed the meeting that Trinity is due to undergo an LEP review. He will be working with Revd Wayne in conducting the review.]

Reviewing LEPs is very important. "It helps to keep the original vision relevant, and the church responsive to changes in its context." (Churches Together in England)]

8. A.O.B.

Minister's Sabbatical: Georgina will be taking a sabbatical from May to July 2027.

A Sabbatical Committee, chaired by Reverend Bruce, will ensure this runs smoothly for Georgina, her family and her churches.

All Saints and Trinity Working Together Group: This is backed by Trinity Trustees, who wish to explore further insight of models in working together. All Saints Church Council will also be consulted on this.

All Saints Growth Action Plan: All Saints is starting a Dementia Friendly Church initiative. This will be advertised in the church notices and all are welcome. The first is on 5 December.

9. Future Events

Circuit Black History Month Event: 17 October, 2.30-6.30pm: Speakers, choir, food, short service and story teller. All are welcome.

Christmas Services: Messy Christingle – 19 December, 4pm, Carol Service – 20 December, 4pm (no morning service), Torchlight Service – 24 December, 4pm, Christmas Day – 25 December, 10am

10. Dates of Future Meetings

Sunday 22nd November 2026 (AGM) after church

Sunday 21st February 2027 after church

Tuesday 15th June 2027, 7.30 pm in the church