



CHRIST CHURCH LILLE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026

Held via Zoom videoconferencing on Monday 20 April 2026 at 20:00

1 Opening with prayers

In this period of vacancy, the Lay Vice-President chairs the meeting

The Lay Vice-President, D Ross, welcomed everybody to the AGM and the meeting opened in prayer. A particular welcome was extended to the Archdeacon and to a church member not on the roll.

Although this AGM is to report on activities in 2025, the fire in the church chancel on the very morning of the meeting was a matter for concern to everyone.

D Bolton therefore gave a short report on the current situation:

- The church is currently closed and inaccessible; the water, gas and electricity are all shut off for security reasons and the air is not breathable.
- The church council is actively searching for alternative meeting places for Sunday services.
- Many messages have been received and we are grateful for everyone's support.
- The Town Hall is being very active and helpful, discussions are ongoing.
We will update our website, the newsletter and Facebook regularly.

2 Apologies for absence

The following people were unable to be present:

M-C Bouillet, C Thieffry

3 The Electoral Roll

There are currently 32 people on the electoral roll.

16 members of the electoral roll were present at the meeting and two guests (including the Archdeacon, Peter Hooper)

4 Minutes of the last meeting

The dates on the minutes from 2025 were wrong (showing 2024). The secretary apologised and said she would correct this.

The meeting noted that complete reports will be available on the website.

5.1 Lay Vice-President's report

2025 was dominated by the interregnum following the retirement of chaplain Debbie. Two candidates applied but neither was the right fit. Options being explored include re-advertising, a house-for-duty arrangement, or a full-time position (subject to funding). In the meantime, Rev. Elizabeth Dean faithfully led communion services throughout the year, and Gary Wilton will join as locum chaplain for July–August 2026. The church ended 2025 in good shape financially, and Daniel Ross praised the strength and commitment of the wider community.

5.2 Finance report

Charts showing the income and expenditure were shown to the meeting.

Accounts for 2025

- **2025 surplus: €12,000**, with reserves of approximately €38,000
- The surplus largely reflects the absence of a chaplain (no stipend costs), partially offset by increased diocesan payments
- Income held up well despite losing some major donors; plate collections have been slowly growing
- Chaplaincy house costs remain high due to ongoing roof repairs, but these should now be largely complete

2026 Budget Options (depending on chaplaincy):

- **No chaplain / House for duty:** Near-neutral financially; a house-for-duty arrangement would actually produce a slightly larger surplus

- **Half stipend (4 days/week):** Estimated cost ~€26,000; annual deficit of ~€3,000 — manageable over 2–3 years from reserves
- **Full stipend:** Estimated cost ~€43,500; annual deficit of ~€22,000 — not sustainable without significant income growth or grants (a potential €10,000/year diocesan subsidy for 3 years was mentioned)

The Archdeacon and the Treasurer are undertaking a zero-based budget review to assess whether a full-time post might be more feasible than current figures suggest. The council agreed no decision should be made that would put the church back into recurring deficit and create pressure on congregational giving.

The accounts had been examined by the official Independent Examiner, Louise Cossey, and approved by the PCC.

The Official Examiner confirmed that she had no concerns and was happy to approve the accounts.

The accounts were accepted by the meeting. A vote of thanks to the Treasurer was unanimously agreed, and a vote of thanks was also offered to the Accounts Examiner whose help and support is much appreciated.

5.3 Other Reports

Full reports from all the groups will be posted on our website. This is a summary.

Fabric (D Bolton):

Chaplaincy house improvements included new doors/windows, a burglar alarm, and roof repairs. The town hall continues to be supportive but timelines for church roof, lighting, toilets, and disabled access remain outstanding.

The piano in the church is not working properly; there are plans to replace it.

Outreach/Solidarity (F Coester):

Donations were made to four organisations including the Beth Abbey orphanage in India and refugee support groups, though the 10% giving target was not met.

Ladies' Bible Study (M Devos):

Continues on Thursday mornings during term time; 6–8 regular attendees.

Music (M Hepler):

Good work ongoing; seeking additional musicians.

Sunday Club (D Ross):

Met only twice in 2025 due to availability and safeguarding clearance requirements; looking to recruit more cleared leaders.

Eco Church / Environment:

New windows and doors have improved energy efficiency at the chaplaincy house. Claire Nevin has kindly agreed to be our Environmental Officer but due to her current workload, discussions are ongoing regarding how we can best support her in taking on this role.

Communications (R Ulyett):

Newsletter has 146 subscribers; help needed with social media. Plans to refresh the website and potentially move to a monthly newsletter format.

5 Safeguarding

Generally in good shape. An external diocesan audit is planned for 2027 via the INIQ organisation. New PCC members will be sent safeguarding training links.

Our commitment to providing a safe environment is integral to what we do

Thank you to everyone who takes part in training and to leaders and volunteers, who are vital to ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone in our care

The meeting thanked Maggie Devos for all her work.

6 Elections and Appointments

• **Churchwardens (2, elected annually)**

Two candidates had been nominated and **David Bolton** and **Maggie Devos** were duly appointed to serve for one year.

- **Lay synod representatives (2)**

Two candidates had been nominated and **Maggie Devos** and **Rosemary Ulyett** were duly appointed to serve for three years

- **Church Council members (5 vacancies)**

Two current members were standing for re-election:

Daniel Ross

Frances Coester

Three candidates had come forward:

Harriet Godfrey

David Newlands

Valerie Swain

All these appointments to the council were unanimously approved by the members. Those newly (re-)elected will stand for the next three years.

- **Appointment of Safeguarding Officer**

M Devos will continue as Assistant Safeguarding Officer.

The meeting thanked her for her commitment.

- **Appointment of the Independent Accounts Examiner**

Louise Cossey had agreed to continue as Accounts Examiner and she was warmly thanked for her work. Her advice was much appreciated.

7 Any other business and closing remarks

The Archdeacon conveyed good wishes from Bishop Robert and diocesan officers. He noted the diocese may be able to help source replacement items (including a new altar) and that alternative worship venues could likely be arranged through good relationships with local Catholic and Protestant churches. He confirmed two potential chaplaincy candidates are in conversation, and expressed genuine optimism about the community's future.

The meeting closed in prayer, followed by a brief PCC session to fix dates — including an emergency PCC meeting set for Thursday 23 April at 8pm and a regular PCC meeting the following Monday 27 April.

There being no other business, the President thanked the members for taking part and the meeting closed with prayers.

Rosemary Ulyett, 27 April 2026

A list of members present is attached.

CHRIST CHURCH LILLE

AGM 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT

Frances Coester

Maggie Devos

Peter Hawkins

Pat Hawkins

Ann Beckwith

Paul Devos

Daniel Ross

David Bolton

Solkem Naïngae

Suzanne Bray

Tony Banton

Martha Hepler

Calvin Devanesan

Valarie Swain

Ruby Kagaon

Others present:

Peter Hooper (Archdeacon)

Ryan Miller (congregation)