

Parochial Church Council Meeting
Monday 15 September 2025 18:30-20:00 Congregational Life

Congregation Report

The two Congregation Life meetings of the annual round of PCC meetings (separate from the four quarterly business meetings) give the PCC a chance to consider the issues affecting the church and the congregation as well as other matters that would not normally fall within the remit of a business meeting (such as the finances). The next quarterly business meeting is on 27 October but, before then, at a date to be decided, there will be a Financial Workshop for all the PCC members to look carefully at progress on our income and expenditure as well as our reserves.

At our meeting in September there was also an important decision: to elect until the next Annual Parochial Church Meeting in May 2026 a replacement member of the PCC as a substitute for Alison Beck who is moving to Scotland. There were three candidates and as a result of the vote Steven Overman (who will be known to many of you as having conducted a survey and exercise on communications with the congregation) was elected.

The PCC also received a report on safeguarding which is a standing agenda item and is an issue that is taken very seriously by both SJP and the Church of England and there were no outstanding issues. Training is proceeding.

The consideration of Congregational Groups and Budget has had follow-up meetings held and a proposal for budget reshaping for 2026 will come to the PCC Business Planning meeting in October. The Earth Justice subdomain for the website has been developed and will be launched soon.

I reported on progress for planning a closer congregation relationship with our sister church St Bart's in New York and our plans for a return visit there for the last week in April 2026. Steven Overman is leading the Steering Group in close co-operation with the clergy and the Development Team. The events will not just be those in the week of 27 April in NY but ones that throughout the year build the relationship between the two congregations (mostly online) on different themes and subjects such as art, culture, history, liturgy and other issues which will evolve naturally from such mutual engagement. We are very excited about this newly developing relationship.

One of the roles of the PCC is to approve the names of those who are licenced by the Bishop to administer the chalice during communion (and each receive a paper licence to that effect) so the list was presented and approved.

The main part of the meeting was taken up with consideration of the results and forward actions from the Season of Listening Away Day and Claire Wright, one of our two Churchwardens who is the lead on this, reminded the PCC that the overall response was positive. We are reinstating the opportunity for the congregation to chat with members of the PCC over coffee on Sundays after PCC meetings. There was a lengthy discussion about other ways communication can be improved and how the PCC members can be more visible to the congregation and interact with them more; a number of proposals were made which you will see come to fruition in the near future. Our Head of Communications Ken Pratt attended the meeting and gave his advice. In addition, any thoughts that you may have on how to improve the understanding and communications between our PCC members

and the congregation would be most welcome. It is felt important that not only does the congregation, yourselves, get to know the PCC members better but also have them explain what they do as the church's governing body, answer your questions and generally interact better. This is very much work in progress and included consideration of providing more information about fundraising and the finances, and other opportunities to visit Princes House and meet the staff team there. The PCC welcomed the fact that there is a draft proposal for some members of our congregation to undertake home communion visits relieving some of the clergy

The clergy at St Pancras are delighted that about 15 members of our congregation as volunteers have set up a rota to attend St Pancras regularly so that the two congregations can start to get to know each other prior to our move there once building work starts on the Wren Project. There will be many more opportunities to get to know each other.

Finally, it was encouraging to learn that many of our donors now understand the variety of work that we do with the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers etc and that more and more are giving specifically for these causes.

Keith Best
PCC Secretary
22/09/2025