

ST. MARY'S BEARWOOD

A GUIDE TO THE PCC, DEANERY SYNOD & ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

St Mary's Bearwood is part of Church of England Birmingham and therefore operates according to the law and guidance of the Church of England. This has implications for how decisions are made, roles in the church are filled, and how we relate to the wider structures of the Church of England. In order to help you understand what this means for St Mary's, this is written as an introduction to the structures, roles and meetings that operate.

ELECTORAL ROLL

The electoral roll is the list of persons who are the qualified electorate for the church. It is the closest thing to a 'church membership' in the Church of England, allowing you to vote for and stand for PCC membership and Deanery Synod at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

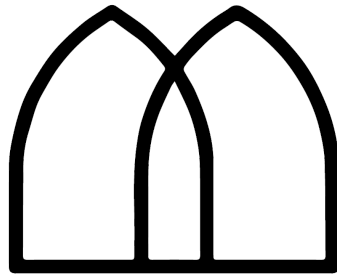
To join the Electoral Roll you must fulfil the following criteria:

1. Have been baptised
2. Be aged 16 or over at the date of the APCM
3. Be a member of the Church of England, or a church in communion with the Church of England and resident in the parish; OR, not being a resident in the parish, to have habitually attended public worship at St Mary's for six months prior to enrolment
4. OR a member in good standing of a church not being in communion with the Church of England but which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; and who is also prepared to declare themselves a member of the Church of England, and having habitually attended public worship at St Mary's for six months prior to enrolment.

In order to sign up to join the electoral roll, you must complete a form either online via Churchsuite (link by email and on Church website) or by paper at Church in the weeks running up to the Annual Church Meeting.

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

The Annual Church Meeting is an open meeting in two parts, to which all connected to St Mary's are welcome and encouraged to attend.



ST. MARY'S BEARWOOD

The first part of the meeting is the Annual Meeting of Parishioners, and this involves the appointment of two Church wardens. An election will only take place when there are more than two nominations.

The second part of the meeting is the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM proper) which elects the lay (non-clergy) members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the lay representatives to the Deanery Synod. Only those whose names appear on the electoral roll are eligible to nominate candidates, vote and/or stand for election. Reports and presentations are also presented by the Vicar, Treasurer and others involved in the life of St Mary's, reflecting upon the previous year and looking ahead to the next.

This year's upcoming Annual Church Meeting will be held after the 10.30am service on Sunday 28th April 2024.

CHURCH WARDENS

The role of the Church Warden is one with a mixture of practical, legal and pastoral responsibility. Wardens are officers of the bishop, not the vicar or PCC, with a duty to co-operate with the vicar in the mission and ministry of the church, representing the congregation, leading by example and holding responsibility for the fabric of the buildings. A full role description is available separately.

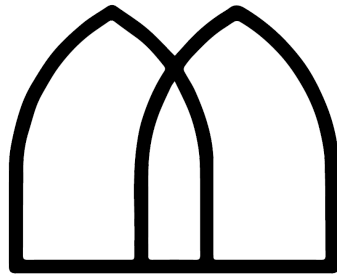
In order to stand/nominate someone for Church Warden, please complete a form in the weeks running up to the Annual Church Meeting.

PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) comprises of the elected lay members, the Church Wardens (ex-officio), elected members of the Deanery Synod, and the clergy. One simple way to understand the role of the PCC is that in the Church of England we are 'episcopally led and synodically governed', meaning we are led by bishops and overseen by councils (synods). In a parish that means being led by an ordained minister and working with an elected PCC. It is the duty of the vicar and PCC to consult together and co-operate in all aspects of church life, including spiritual, legal, financial, pastoral and missional matters. The PCC meets between six and nine times a year and operates between meetings through sub-groups for specific tasks.

As a PCC, members are:

- **Representatives** of the church, communicating the views of the congregation and community to the PCC and the decisions of the PCC to the congregation.



ST. MARY'S BEARWOOD

They also have a role in representing views up and down the governance chain of the Church of England.

- **Leaders** in the church, setting the tone of the kind of the church we wish to be and being an example in our faith and discipleship to Jesus. They are to co-operate with the minister in strategic vision and mission of the church and provide oversight to church life without being drawn into every detail.
- **Servants** who co-operate with one another in serving the good of the church, putting others before ourselves, and practically doing what they can to help. They share in prayerfully seeking God's direction for our decision making.
- **Stewards** of our finances and resources and legally responsible and accountable as trustees for the oversight of our funds as a registered charity. They carry with the wardens the responsibility for the building and are the body that legally employs staff and ensures policies are in place and reviewed. They also have responsibility for safeguarding in the church.

PCC members are automatically trustees of the church as a charity and therefore it is important to understand the responsibility this role will entail.

If you would like to stand for election to PCC, please read the separate document with a full role description and 'The essential Trustee: What you need to know (CC3)' available on request or from www.charitycommission.gov.uk. In order to stand for election you must be on St Mary's electoral roll and your position will be subject to satisfactory completion of a DBS check and safeguarding training. Please complete a nomination form in the weeks running up to the Annual Church Meeting.

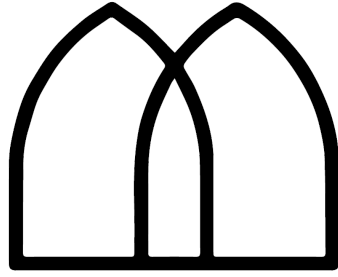
An occasion to find out more will be on **Monday 8th April 7.30pm** at St Mary's. Please come to hear more about what's involved in being a member of PCC.

STANDING COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee comprises of the Clergy, Church Wardens, Lay Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the PCC (the latter three appointed by the PCC). The Standing Committee is there to conduct PCC business and make decisions on behalf of the PCC between meetings. In addition to its members, our Operations Co-ordinator attends in order to contribute relevant detail to discussion. It generally meets on alternate months to the PCC and when required.

DEANERY SYNOD

As part of Church of England Birmingham (Diocese), St Mary's Bearwood is part of the Warley & Edgbaston Deanery. This is a medium sized grouping of churches that



ST. MARY'S BEARWOOD

provides a level of structure for support and discussion at a more local scale than the diocese as a whole. The Deanery Synod is comprised of clergy and elected lay representatives from each of the churches. Meeting generally three times a year, discussion involves issues affecting the wider Church of England. From the Deanery Synod are elected members of the Diocesan Synod and from the Diocesan Synod are elected members of the General Synod (national), and therefore this is a key stepping-stone in the governance of the whole of the Church of England.

Elected Deanery Synod representatives are elected for three years and are ex-officio members of St Mary's Bearwood PCC. If you would like to stand for election to Deanery Synod then please complete a nomination form in the weeks running up to the Annual Church Meeting.