



**The Parochial Church Council
Of
St Philip & St James
Hucclecote**

**Annual Report and Accounts
Year ended 31st December 2025**

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE REPORT

I hope as you read the detailed reports which follow this one, you will gain the sense that there has been a lot to celebrate in 2025. Ministry has been varied and rewarding over the year and this is entirely due to the diversity of gifts and heart of service that so many across our church have shown. Thank you to each and every one of you for all your time, skill, and hard work.

These are signs that our part of the Body of Christ is healthy and active, and I find it a huge encouragement at times when events in the wider world seem to be at odds with the Gospel. In reality, the world has always seen its fair share of turmoil, but the signs of God's Kingdom are there for those who look.

Starting the year with our first Covenant service was really special, both in acknowledging all the ways that people served in a variety of capacities during 2024 and in setting the tone for the year to come. All we do is for God's glory, in both quiet times and full ones. The Methodist covenant service never fails to challenge me every time I read and pray it.

In the early part of 2025, PCC were hard at work as we established sub-teams for various areas of church life. Some were simply a re-naming of teams which had already existed while others were new ways of ensuring good coordination and communication between those involved in various activities. Once each sub-team was established, we also worked on terms of reference so that it would be clear what their purpose, aims, and responsibilities were.

The aim of this was to clarify who was responsible for what and to facilitate good two-way communication between various groups and the PCC, especially if PCC members are not the ones leading those efforts. It has also gradually helped to make clear what activities and groups are part of our church's outreach and ministry. This is still a work in progress, but one which we hope will provide a good foundation for the future, enabling a sharing in leadership.

There was also the sale of 36 Larkhay Road, which in the process meant that the Community Garden, Youth Centre, and Gordon Rooms now legally belong to the church. I am very grateful to the Diocese for taking care of all the legal paperwork and generally supporting us through this process at their own expense.

The replacement of the church lights with LED equivalents in the summer was a perfect case of people bringing their skills and gifts to bear. The improvement in lighting in the church is noticeable, and the fact that the new LEDs are cheaper and more environmentally friendly has made this a win from every perspective. That we were able to get a grant from the Diocese to cover much of the cost is the icing on the cake. Thank you to everyone who pitched in and made this happen, particularly Kevin who had to work at such heights for several days running.

In June and July, conversations and work began on our vision process, seeking and discerning where God is leading us, who and what God is calling St Philip & St James Church to be and look like in the coming years. We decided to take our time, prioritising listening to God and one another through prayer and conversation throughout the Autumn. In early 2026 the process will continue, refining what we have heard which will help us set priorities and motivate direction in the coming years. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of this – it is important that this vision does not just come from me or other leaders but is shared and owned by us all.

I feel extremely blessed to be your Priest-in-Charge, serving God, the church, and the people of Hucclecote, and I regularly thank God for bringing me to this place. It has been an amazing privilege to see and hear the ways in which people at different places in their lives and their walk with Jesus have gone deeper in faith this year. On a personal note, Dougie's baptism by immersion by Duncan in June was a particular high point.

None of this would be possible without so many people, but a particular thanks to Chris Brookes and Kevin Hobbs, our Church Wardens, my clergy colleagues Revd. Miriam Davis, Revd. Jane Twitty, Revd. Claire Greenwood and Revd. Duncan Hutchison, Margaret Edwards our PCC secretary and Parish Safeguarding Officer, Alison Dight our PCC lay chair, PCC members, and Louisa Scrivener our administrator. Thank you also to my family Kirsty, Arthur, & Dougie for your understanding, love, and engagement with this calling we share. My role would be so much harder without your enthusiasm, patience, wisdom, support and insight. I am excited to see where God is leading us for the coming season.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

TRUSTEES REPORT

Administrative Information

St Philip & St James is situated in Larkhay Road, Hucclecote, Gloucester. It is part of the Diocese of Gloucester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address is:

Church Office
Stone Building
18 Larkhay Road
Hucclecote
Gloucester
GL3 3NS

Telephone: 01452 372177

Website: www.hucclecotechurch.uk & www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14161/

Social Media: Facebook: "St Philip and St James Church Hucclecote"

Instagram: "Stpandstj"

E mail: stpandstj.hucc@mail.com

Bankers: National Westminster Bank
21 Eastgate Street
Gloucester GL1 1NY

Independent Examiner: Janet Wilce

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity registered with the Charity Commission.

PCC members who have served from 1st January 2025 until **12th April 2026**, when this report was approved, are on page 4. This annual report was accepted and approved by the PCC via email responses.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

PCC 2025- 2026. (status after the APCM 14th May 2025)

Ex Officio:

Revd. Dr. Joseph Mottram	Priest in Charge. From September 2024
Revd. Duncan Hutchison	Associate Priest from June 2023 (On secondment during 2025- returned February 2026)
Revd. Miriam Davis	Assistant Curate from June 2021

Churchwardens

Mr Kevin Hobbs	re-elected APCM 2025
Mr Chris Brookes	re-elected APCM 2025

Deanery Synod Representatives

Canon (Mrs) Margaret Edwards	elected 2023	*PCC Secretary & Safeguarding Officer
Mrs Doreen McLellan	re-elected 2023	
One vacancy		

Elected Members of the PCC (up to 12 in number)

Mr Tom Brown	elected 2023.	* can be re-elected
Mrs Marion Cook	re-elected 2023	
Mrs Susan Delaney	elected 2025	
Dr Alison Dight	elected 2024	
Mr Jackson Klein	elected 2024	
Mr Alan Preece	elected 2023.	* can be re-elected
Mr Steve Plant	elected 2024	
Mrs Jane Stock	elected 2023	*Electoral Roll Officer since Sept 2023 *Can be re-elected
Mr Lee Thornton	re-elected 2023.	* Treasurer

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All church attendees are encouraged to register on the electoral roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC is supported in its work by sub-teams whose views and recommendations are considered by the PCC when making decisions.

Staff

1 member of staff, Church Administrator (Louisa Scrivener), worked 12 hours per week.

For APCM 2026:

Churchwardens - 2 to be elected

Deanery Synod - 3 vacancies

PCC - 8 vacancies

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

St Philip & St James PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting the parish, the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It also has the maintenance responsibilities for St Philip & St James Church and associated property. The PCC is registered with the Charity Commissioners and all members of the PCC are Trustees of the Charity; as such Hucclecote PCC must adhere to Charity Commission rules and regulations.

During 2025, the PCC met monthly on the second Wednesday evening, with the exception of August.

2025

The normal pattern of Sunday services continued during 2025, with 8.30am Holy Communion every week and 10:30am Morning Worship for most Sundays, with Communion on the 2nd Sunday of the month. On the first Sunday of the month the 10.30am follows an Intergenerational format with no Junior Church on that day. Baptisms took place at that service unless there were extenuating circumstances. Joint services at 10.00am were held on the following occasions:

- 12th January – Covenant Service
- 20th April – Easter Sunday
- 8th June – Pentecost
- 19th October – Harvest Service
- 28th December – Sunday between Christmas and New Year

From September onwards the prayer meeting on the first Wednesday of the month became a contemplative evening prayer service in the church at 7:30pm as a trial. On Remembrance Sunday there was no 10:30 service to allow people to attend the Ecumenical Civic Service at the Hucclecote War Memorial. Messy Church took place on the 2nd Saturday of each month, with the exception of August.

Additional services in 2025

5th March Ash Wednesday 7:30pm Holy Communion

6th April 4:30pm Prayers for the Journey service

14th, 15th, 16th April 8pm Compline

17th April - Maundy Thursday, 7:30pm Holy Communion

18th April - Good Friday, church open for contemplative prayer 10am-3pm

4th June Taize Evening Prayer at 7:30pm

2nd November - Memorial service at 4pm

Christmas Activities

Christmas Make It – 21st November. An evening of Christmas crafts.

Christingle Service – Saturday 6th December at 4.00pm

Messy Christmas – Saturday 13th December

Nativity on a Lorry – 11th & 12th December; we hosted the refreshments on 11th December

Carols at The Wagon & Horses- 18th December, singers from 3 Hucclecote churches

Christmas services

Carol Service - Sunday 21st December

Christmas Eve - 4.00pm – Crib service & at 11.30pm – Midnight Communion

Christmas Day - 10.00am Holy Communion service

Achievements and performance

Sunday attendance figures have remained fairly steady throughout the year, and we have seen some new members at both congregations.

The leaders of our church activities continue to take as many opportunities as possible to share their faith with those attending the groups.

Margaret Edwards

PCC MEETINGS

From January 2025, it was suggested we hold our PCC meetings on a monthly basis, with the exception of August. This has allowed for shorter 'business' agendas and more time can be given to discussion items. It also eliminates the need for the bi-monthly Standing Committee meetings. This seems to have been an improvement and PCC meetings can now end close to or before 9.30pm.

PCC Agenda items always include a financial report, Safeguarding issues and updates as well as reports from the Deanery Synod and any of the PCC Sub-teams who wish to share information.

At the APCM on Wednesday 14th May 2025, Kevin Hobbs and Chris Brookes were elected to stand as Churchwardens for the year 2025-2026 and Sue Delaney was elected to PCC, with the remaining vacancies unfilled. The one vacancy on Deanery Synod was not filled.

2025 was the time for a complete revision of the Electoral Roll and thanks to a lot of work on the part of Jane Stock (Electoral Roll officer), we achieved an ER of 108; a complete revision usually results in a fall in numbers.

The Statutory and essential reports had been accepted and adopted by the PCC at the meeting on 11th March 2026, in readiness for the APCM.

During 2025, a huge amount of work has been undertaken by our two Churchwardens, with help from members of the Grounds & Buildings team to care for and maintain our church and buildings as much as they are able. In addition, volunteers join this team as and when requested, to work on the Churchyard and grounds, clearing weeds and cutting back hedges.

The secretary would like to thank PCC members for their commitment to their duties and attendance at meetings. Also, huge thanks must go to all those who volunteer for our church services and the many regular activities taking place on the church site or the ones off-site but under the church umbrella. The giving of time and talents by so many volunteers, means that we can honour God in all we do as a worshipping community.

Margaret Edwards
PCC Secretary

STATUTORY REPORTS

2025 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

APCM of St Philip & St James Church Hucclecote Commentary on Income & Expenditure

Total income: in 2025 this was £162,580 which is a £29,853 increase in income from 2024.

This is a significant increase, however, a large proportion of this came from legacies which totalled £16,966. Excluding these legacies, the income increase from 2024 would have been £12,887 (10%).

To provide more detail:

Voluntary Giving: With a total of £122,292 this was £27,130 more than 2024. The change was mainly due to:

- The legacies mentioned above were £14,966 more than received in 2024. These were given free of any provisions so will help support the work of the Church in the future.
- Planned giving (categories 001 & 002) Increased by £4,340 during 2025 to £78,120.
- Gift Aid receipts increased by £1,781 in 2025 to £17,852 as a result of an increase in tax efficient planned giving and a claim on using the small donation gift scheme claim.
- Other Giving & Donations increased by £3,979 during the year to £4,711, part of this was down to ensuring that groups operating on a donation basis were included in this category rather than 'Other Church Activities' category

Charitable Activities: The income in these categories grew by £2,911 to £15,064

- Our grant income increased by £3,495, with grants to support project work on the main Church building for the replacement of LED lighting and window grills. In addition, we have continued to receive small grants for the Community Garden and Tea & Toast
- Fund raising increased during the year by £1,093 to £2,572
- Our Parochial Fee Income from funerals and weddings declined during the year by £1,679 to £8,436, reflecting the reduction of funerals held in Church.

Other Trading Activities: This income remained overall fairly static during 2025

- From Hall Lettings, the income increased by £1,234 during 2025
- There was a drop in income from Other Church Activities. However, as mentioned above, this is related to our categorisation of groups which ask for donations rather than charge a fixed amount

Investment income: the £3,919 interest income in 2025 was a £462 reduction compared to 2024

- This reflects the reduction of interest rates we receive for our funds which are all held in banks. We expect the investment income to continue to decline further in 2026.

Total Expenditure - Our expenditure totalled £139,656 in 2025 which was a £6,382 reduction compared to 2024.

Fund Raising costs

- This category of expense increased from £104 to £497 in the year.

Charitable Activities: The spending in this category reduced by £8,067 during 2025 to £123,623 and was driven by main factors of:

- **Charities and Mission Giving (Tithe):** As outlined in the 2024 APCM report, our approach to our tithe giving changed at the start of 2025. This resulted in a reduction to £4,090 in 2025 from £8,180 in 2024. We

reduced the impact on the General Fund by using the Tanzanian Restricted fund to support the work of student training at LTTC and a specific project at the Church in Tanzania.

- Whilst reducing the overall amounts, we have continued to provide support to mission partners through events and focused collections. We recorded £506.50 of these 'agency' collections which went into our bank accounts and were paid out.
 - **Local Mission and Evangelism:** Our expenditure in the category is supported mainly by specific funds and was £4,801 less than 2024 at £4,152. This largely reflects that in 2024 (*and prior years*) expenditure for the Community Garden infrastructure had been funded by a number of grants and donations.
 - **Parish Share:** This is our largest expenditure and remained static at £70,000. Whilst this is a sizeable sum, we continue to receive a discount from the Diocese for the true cost of what is provided.
 - **Repairs and Maintenance:** We have again increased our expenditure on our buildings during 2025 to £12,685 from £8,043 in 2024. The designated expenditure was for the works supported by grants. Our plans for 2026 on necessary repairs and maintenance mean that the spend in this category will increase substantially.
 - **Heating & Lighting:** The total cost of heating and lighting reduced to £9,607 from £10,977 in 2024. The changes to lighting in Church made in September 2025 which were supported by a Diocesan grant, has had a major impact on electric costs for the main Church building. However, energy prices for all our utilities as they come up for renewal are continuing to show significant increases.
 - **Parochial Fees Remittance** (051, 052 & 053). These expenses are related to the income category Parochial Fees (014) and so with the reduction in income, there has been a corresponding reduction in expenses to £4,713 in 2025 from £6,058 in 2024.
 - **Churchyard Expenses:** Whilst there was only a small movement in this category, it is worth highlighting that this would not have been possible without the help of a number of working parties, which have started to make a large impact on the hedges and trees in the graveyard.
- Other Expenditure:** these costs increased by £1,292 to £15,534 in 2025 and were driven by:
- Salary for our administrator increased from annual increase in salary and an element of overtime, paid for work implementing a new system.
 - Administration and insurance costs increased by £279 and £283 respectively compared to 2024.

Income over Expenditure

In 2025 we generated a surplus of £22,926 compared to a deficit of £13,308 in 2024. Excluding the legacies in 2025, the surplus would have been £5,074.

Commentary on Balance Sheet Funds

With the surplus produced from the Income & Expenditure our overall funds available at the end of 2025 are £161,489, up from £138,566 in 2024.

Analysis of movements in funds

General Fund - It is from our General Fund that we pay for main operating expenses of the church.

- We produced a surplus for 2025 of £1,621 after transfers, which was an improvement on 2024 where we had a deficit of £4,994.
- The General Fund balance at the end of 2025 stands at £29,076. This surplus in the General fund is close to covering three months of expenditure, that we aim to hold as part of our management of our resources.
- Whilst we have managed to return to a surplus on the General Fund in 2025, the ongoing expense increases expected in 2026, particularly around repairs and maintenance mean that the PCC expects to transfer money from certain Designated Funds to maintain the strength of the General Fund balance.

Designated funds – Closing at £54,107 at the end of 2025 these have increased by £23,825 during the year.

- As mentioned above, we have the legacies received during 2025 held in a designated fund, awaiting the PCC to plan and decide how this money should be used.
- Essential maintenance fund has grown and still benefits from a £3,000 a year transfer from the general fund. With a balance of £11,376 and with plans for significant repairs, part of this and other designated funds are likely to be transferred to the General Fund to support maintenance and repair expenses during 2026
- As mentioned in the 2024 APCM financial report, the surplus monies from funerals and weddings are now categorised as the Designated PCC fund with the balance from the previous restricted PCC fund transferred across.

Restricted Funds – we had a net movement out of the restricted funds of £8,978 during 2025.

- We have used the Tanzania Restricted fund, which has built up over the years to support the sponsorship for theology students in Tanzania and a few other projects there. This amounted to £1,810.
- As mentioned in the Designated Funds section above, we transferred out the money (£7,602) from the historic PCC fund that held monies associated with Funerals and Weddings
- We have £64,173 in the historic Bungalow & Building fund, whose history goes back circa 20+ years. Given that we have resolved with the Diocese the necessary legal aspects of the arrangement we had with them, the PCC is exploring what we specifically need to do to release these funds, to ensure we are compliant with rules around use of restricted funds.

Other notes

The PCC's accounts for the year ending 31st December 2025 have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis using the Finance Co-ordinator accounting software.

To align with the Diocese Cashbook that most churches in the Deanery use, total Fees retained by PCC are displayed on a 'net' basis.

Values are show in pounds, so there may be minor variance to totals if they were in pence.

Lee Thornton

Treasurer

Approved by the PCC on 11th March 2026

St Philip & St James Church Hucclecote - 1133978

Statement of Financial Activities - summary

For the period from 01 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted fun ds	Designa t ed fun ds	R estrict ed fun ds	Total fun ds	Prior year total fun ds
Total income	126,682	35,108	789	162,580	132,727
Total expenditure	122,061	15,429	2,165	139,656	146,038
Net income / (expenditure) resources before tra	4,621	19,679	-1,3 76	22,924	-13,310
Gross transfers between funds - in	—	10,6 02	—	10,6 02	9,608
Gross transfers between funds - out	-3 ,00 0	—	-7 ,60 2	-10,602	-9 ,60 8
Net movement in funds	1,621	30,282	-8 ,9 78	22,924	-13,310
Total funds brought forward	27,455	23,825	87,285	258,566	271,876
Total funds carried forward	29,076	54,107	78,306	281,491	258,566
Unrestricted					
General fund	29,0 76	—	—	29,0 76	27 ,4 55
Designated					
Legacy fund Designated	—	16,9 66	—	16,9 66	—
Essential Maintenance	—	11,3 76	—	11,3 76	10,3 59
PCC Fund(D)	—	11,2 14	—	11,2 14	—
Treasurers Discretionary Fund	—	4,525	—	4,525	4,525
Social Fund	—	2,359	—	2,359	1,641
Lunch Club	—	1,994	—	1,994	767
Depreciation Fund	—	1,511	—	1,511	1,511
Teddy Bears	—	1,509	—	1,509	1,636
Computer Fund	—	1,346	—	1,346	1,346
Coffee Pot	—	836	—	836	799
Community Garden Designated	—	454	—	454	888
Messy Church	—	12	—	12	348
Restricted					
PCC Fund	—	—	—	—	7,602
Building Fund	—	—	64 ,1 73	64 ,1 73	64 ,1 73
Ann Smith Bequest	—	—	4,352	4,352	4,352
Technology in CHurch - donation	—	—	3,675	3,675	3,675
Childrens Worker	—	—	2,468	2,468	2,363
Tanzania Fund	—	—	1,409	1,409	2,534
Church interior decorations	—	—	610	610	610
Boiler Fund	—	—	520	520	520
Wardens Discretionary Fund	—	—	500	500	500
Local Mission	—	—	341	341	697
Music and Worship Fund	—	—	245	245	245
Churchyard Fund	—	—	11	11	11

St Philip & St James Church Hucclecote - 1133978
Analysis of income and expenditure
Selected period: 01 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	This year	Total Last year
Income					
Donations and legacies					
001 - TaxEfficientPlanned Giving	71,010	—	—	71,010	67,120
002 - Other Planned Giving	6,510	—	600	7,110	6,660
003 - Other Collections at Services	4,544	—	100	4,644	3,580
005 - Other Giving and Donations -	2,417	2,208	85	4,711	732
007 - Gift Aid	17,852	—	—	17,852	16,071
008 - Legacy	—	16,966	—	16,966	1,000
Donations and legacies Sub-	102,334	19,175	785	122,295	95,165
Income from charitable activities					
010 - Non-recurring Grants	720	3,335	—	4,055	560
011 - Fund Raising Events	1,079	1,492	—	2,571	1,478
014 - Total Parochial Fees Income	—	8,436	—	8,436	10,115
Income from charitable	1,799	13,264	—	15,064	12,153
activities Sub-totals					
Other trading activities					
016 - HallLettings	16,297	—	—	16,297	15,063
017 - other Church Activities	2,336	2,668	—	5,004	5,963
Other trading activities Sub- totals	18,633	2,668	—	21,302	21,026
Investments					
012 -Dividends and Interest	3,91	—	4	3,91	4,38
Investments Totals	5	—	4	9	1
	3,91			3,91	4,38
Income Grand totals	125,682	35,108	789	162,580	132,727
Expenditure					
Raising funds					
030 - Fund Raising Costs	49	—	—	49	10
Raising funds Sub-totals	7	—	—	7	4
	49			49	10
Expenditure on charitable activities	7			7	4
031 - Donations/GrantstoCharities& Mission	2,280	—	1,810	4,090	8,180
032 - Parish Share	70,000	—	—	70,000	70,000
034 - Clergy Expenses	1,571	—	—	1,571	321
037 - Local Mission and Evangelism	40	3,756	355	4,152	8,953
038 - Children and Youth Work Costs	—	986	—	986	2,964
040 - Cleaning Costs	5,302	—	—	5,302	5,372
041 - Minor Repairs & Routine Maintenance	8,267	4,418	—	12,686	8,043
043 - Oth' Church Expenses & service provision	1,968	1,206	—	3,174	3,769
044 - Churchyard Maintenance	4,985	—	—	4,985	4,960
045 - Flowers	20	330	—	350	200
046 - Music Costs	869	—	—	869	831
047 - Heating and Lighting	9,607	—	—	9,607	10,997
048 - Water	1,116	—	—	1,116	1,039
051 - Parochial Fees Remittance to	—	494	—	494	385
052 - Parochial Fees Remitted to Visiting Mini	—	2,413	—	2,413	3,628
053 - Parochial Fees Remitted to other	—	1,824	—	1,824	2,043
	106,028	15,429	2,165	123,623	131,690
Expenditure on charitable					
activities Sub-totals					
Other expenditure					
033 - SalariesandWages	8,872	—	—	8,872	8,102
039 - Insurance Costs	4,261	—	—	4,261	3,978
042 - Administration Costs	2,401	—	—	2,401	2,122
058 - SundryExpenses	—	—	—	—	40
Other expenditure Sub-totals	15,535	—	—	15,535	14,243
Expenditure	122,061	15,429	2,165	139,656	146,038
Income minus Expenditure	4,621	19,679	-1,376	22,924	-13,311



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

The Parochial Church Council of St Philip & St James Church, Hucclecote,
Gloucester

On accounts for the year
ended

31-December-2025

Charity no
(if any)

1133978

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above
charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/12/ 2025**

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation
of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act
2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out
under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I
have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission
under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have
come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me
cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of
the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection
with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a
proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed: J Wilce

Date: 17/02/2026

Name: Janet Wilce

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Address:

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

Name of the charity	
Registered office	
Charity number	
Accounting period	
Name of the examiner	
Address of the examiner	
Email address of the examiner	
Phone number of the examiner	
Fax number of the examiner	
Mobile number of the examiner	
Home address of the examiner	
Work address of the examiner	
Other address of the examiner	
Other contact details of the examiner	
Other information	

DEANERY SYNOD

The Synod convened 3 times during 2025 March, July, and November. There were other gatherings for worship and discussions open more widely to our PCCs/members of our congregations.

During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity there was an opportunity for prayer and praise as guests of Gloucester Community Church at St Luke's, Stroud Road. The service was well attended by representatives from churches across the deanery. An invitation was extended to prayer-walk the city <https://www.pray4gloucester.uk/>

20 March - Synod met at St Nicholas Church, Hardwicke. The Revd. Richard Martin had recently retired and moved away. Jo Pestell, Area Dean (AD) sent him our prayers and very best wishes for a long and happy retirement. We had a warm welcome from the team there and were treated to an extensive array of beautiful home-made cakes at the refreshment break.

There was no invited speaker for this meeting as we wished to focus on the next steps to implementing the Deanery Strategic Plan (DSP), noting that our deanery was in line for early funding to support finance and administration. The roles of a Deanery operations lead and an oversight team, relative to those Deanery Standing Committee and the AD needed defining; and terms of reference were drawn up. The synod was broadly in favour of the progress made so far and approved the terms of reference.

Before the next Synod on 8 July there were four opportunities for worshipping together.

- Sunrise Service at 6 am Easter Day 20 April Robinswood Hill.
- Ascension Day 29 May, a Eucharist service to celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ and a social get together at St George's Church, Tuffley.
- 31 May, ecumenical service at the Cathedral with 36 worshipping communities taking part, and young people leading prayers. During this we celebrated the success of the prayer walking challenge as 100% of Gloucester had been prayed for by those who had taken part since January. And the prayerwalking app was reset with people encouraged to keep praying.

Alongside prayer and praise gatherings, interested parties have met to discuss the Parish Share. The City Deanery is heavily subsidised by the other deaneries plus the Diocese as we seek to increase our contribution (currently we give roughly 50% of the cost). Parish representatives / incumbents / treasurers / churchwardens were invited to meet with members of the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) and Archdeacon Hilary on 7 May in Church House to discuss the new approach to their allocations for 2026. There was tension and defensiveness as we all took our seats with copies of the accounts at the ready to state our case. Thankfully, anxieties were soon relieved as there was understanding on the part of the DBF of where we were as parishes. There was transparency in the allocations which were based on what we had said we could afford. There were also of course warnings against complacency and requests that we make every effort to raise our commitments. The phrase we came away with was "realistic generosity": response to the generosity we each had received at God's hand with the very best we could manage.

8 July - This Synod was held in the Church of St Barnabas where members of synod and our speakers enjoyed a generous finger buffet prepared by a team of volunteers as we held our annual social event at the beginning of a new synod year. The Revd. Sarah Todd thanked her team and opened the meeting with prayer.

The speaker for the meeting was Revd. Kate Stacey, Collaborative Ministry Lead (Life Long Learning) from the Department of Mission and Ministry. As her title suggests she was responsible for the development and learning for both clergy and laity as both are called by God to service and to work collaboratively in the mission of the church within their wider communities. Consequently, training and development are essential for working together and need to be offered in easily accessible ways, such as bite-sized modules rather than 16-week courses as the Pastoral Assistants course had been. To thrive, parishes need called and committed laity, respected and valued in implementation.

In the business meeting that followed members were told of the progress in implementation of the DSP. This was especially so with the Youth Connector, Revd. Helen Champion and in the moves towards appointing a Deanery Operations Lead.

Deanery Evensong on Sunday 7 September was led by Revd. Mark Siddall at St James' Church, Quedgeley. The congregation was small however the sermon and prayers were uplifting.

19 November – Revd. Steve Saville, newly appointed priest in charge at St James' Church Upton Street welcomed the members and opened the meeting with prayer.

Jo (AD) welcomed the members of Synod and also welcomed Lydia Knight, the Deanery Operations Lead for Gloucester City Deanery. She would be starting work in January but was eager to get to know us. Lydia shared a bit of her background and her first reflections on the role she had recently accepted. Each parish and benefice then shared the joys and challenges of their ministries.

The meeting was well attended as members were asked to bring other people from their PCCs and congregations; this is a part of a policy to have more open meetings.

The feedback on the Parish Share meeting with the DBF was very positive. The ongoing treasurers meeting with Jane (deanery parish share coordinator) are proving helpful and mutually supportive.

The Deanery calendar for 2026 was circulated and members were asked to note that on 14 March there would be a Deanery Day and we could review our progress over last 3 years, reflect on Lydia Knight's first couple of months with us and share our thoughts on priorities.

We also spoke of the need to give some thought in our parishes to the elections to the new Deanery Synod which would happen at our APCM, and the effort we should make to encourage enthusiasm around this role.

Over the year we have Done Something Positive with our DSP.

- Youth work in the deanery has had a terrific boost,
- we have a more realistic approach to finance but of course much more to do
- the Deanery Operations Lead is in place
- Collaboration across the city with prayer walking

We need more volunteers from the laity to step up at this exciting time and make the voices of their parishes and worshipping communities heard.

Mary Gould (Deanery Lay Chair)
March 2026

CHURCH FABRIC STATUTORY REPORT

Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measures 1991 St Philip and St James Church, Hucclecote

We have been able to make good progress on maintenance of the church building during 2025.

A highlight of the year was the replacement of the church lighting with LED bulbs and floodlights. This work was led by Kevin Hobbs with the support of a large team of volunteers from our church family who were amazingly adept at climbing the scaffold tower. The quartz halogen floodlights in the north aisle and chancel have been replaced by 30w LED floodlights; the floodlights in the roof space by 50w LED floodlights. For the spotlights we replaced all the bulbs with 10w LED bulbs. The lights in the vestry, inner vestry and toilet were replaced with LED alternatives. LED bulbs were also fitted in the four outdoor dusk to dawn lights and the porch light. The Diocese funded the full cost of the LED lights under the Net Zero Quick Wins grant, so we only had to pay for hire of a scaffold tower. The LED lighting uses a fraction of the power of our old lights, significantly reducing our electric bill. The emergency lighting has been tested.

Following on from the refurbishment of the two-vent window in the north aisle last year, we engaged SDL Stained Glass to refurbish the single vent window to further improve ventilation in the building. The vent has been de-rusted, re-painted with three coats satin black, and a new cleat and cord fitted. The extra ventilation was a real blessing during the hot summer months. SDL also removed the polycarbonate sheets and fitted black polyester powder coated stainless steel window guards on both vented windows. The window guards protect the glass from external breakage and allow considerably more light into the church. This is one of the 2021 Quinquennial Report recommendations. We received a grant of 40% of the costs from the Diocese under the Minor Improvements scheme.

The church toilet pan has been replaced and the surrounding area refurbished. The new toilet is securely bolted to the floor; the old boarding has been removed. New vinyl flooring has been fitted. The work was carried out by Steve Plant and Tom Brown.

Gutter clearing carried out by Forrester Access highlighted that we had problems with slipped lead soakers and cracks in the flashing on the south nave roof. These have since been repaired by specialist lead worker Neil Williams; the lead soakers have been put back in place and the flashing repaired. A detailed gutter clearing report with photos was provided and shared with the PCC and the church surveyor.

The kitchenette hot water boiler has been serviced and a new filter installed. The annual gas safety inspection on the boiler was carried out. The annual fire extinguisher inspection has also taken place. PAT testing on portable electrical appliances was carried out. Earth testing was also carried out; this has to be done every other year.

The internal walls remain in a poor state. The specification of the work required has been agreed and issued to suppliers for quotations. Two suppliers visited the church to assess the work involved, and one provided a quote. We have approval to carry out the redecoration but need to raise further funds before this can be done. We are looking into the possibility of grants.

Our church surveyor David Arnold visited in November to investigate the repairs needed to the inner vestry ceiling; we have placed an order for him to produce a detailed specification with drawings which we can submit to the DAC for approval, with a view to carrying out the work in 2026. Further work has been carried out on the inner vestry wall to investigate damp problems on the inner vestry and toilet walls. The damp is occurring because there is no end stop on the gutter in the vestry roof. We are working on a solution.

We have a crack in the outer vestry wall. A 'Tell-Tale' has been fixed to the wall so we can monitor if the crack is expanding. Our understanding is this is normal building movement. We are monitoring.

We visited St Laurence Church Stroud on a cold Sunday morning to assess their far infrared Halo heating system. We were disappointed with the heat provided and felt it would not be an appropriate replacement for our gas boiler heating system.

Churchwardens - Kevin Hobbs and Chris Brookes

TERRIER AND INVENTORY

We have checked the Terrier and Inventory and declare that it represents, to the best of our knowledge, an accurate record of the land and articles belonging to the parish church, subject to the amendments shown below.

Items which have been removed in 2024/25:

None

Items added in 2024/25:

1 Roland RD800 piano – on loan

Amendment

4. Churchyard Monuments

(c) There are five War Graves Commission graves (previously two).

8. Schedule of Church Plate – one glass cruet from the Cruet Set is now stored on the inner vestry shelf. We were unable to find the Cruet silverplate tray.

9. Schedule of Furnishings and Fittings – the Brass Lectern has been moved to the Gordon Rooms.

15. Woodwork - there are 153 chairs in church (previously 152), plus 72 old type chairs in the Gordon Rooms and 1 in the Stone Building.

17. Textiles – there are 10 Alms bags, 4 red, 3 purple, 2 green and 1 blue (previously 9).

20. Miscellanea - the Collectin electronic card reader is now located on the welcome desk. The Roland RD300 piano is now stored behind the altar.

We have checked the Log Book and declare that to the best of our knowledge, it represents an accurate record of the repairs and work carried out in the church building during the past year.

Churchwardens - Kevin Hobbs and Chris Brookes

SAFEGUARDING

At St Philip & St James Church, the PCC take seriously their legal duties to promote a safe environment for all, working closely with the Safeguarding Department at the Diocese of Gloucester. In our responsibility for the protection both of Vulnerable Adults and of Children & Young People (Under 18s), we follow closely the advice given to PCCs and the necessary legal documents are on display in church and in all our church buildings where our activities take place.

Safeguarding training to at least Foundation level (the second training level) is mandatory for all PCC members, as they are Charity Trustees.

Appropriate Safeguarding Training is necessary for all our church volunteers, and all new volunteers are required to go through the Safer Recruitment process. Training in Domestic Abuse Awareness is now considered essential for all PCC members and all our volunteers, even those whose roles do not require a DBS Certificate.

Once again, the church recognized Safeguarding Sunday on 16th November 2025, using some of the prayers and resources from the ThirtyOne:Eight website and highlighting the importance of Safeguarding in all our church activities.

We have a legal duty to produce the statutory documents (as listed below) in time for the APCM, to highlight them in this Annual Report and to display them in all public areas of our church buildings. Approval and adoption of these documents by the PCC was sought at the meeting on **11th March 2026**.

The full versions of the documents are available in the Church Office or available electronically on request by contacting the church office or the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The following documents need to be on display on all our Noticeboards:

2026 Safeguarding Policy.
Promoting a Safer Church - Parish Safeguarding Handbook (Oct 2018 version)
Types of Abuse (including signs and symptoms)
Poster with details of Safeguarding Officer
Supporting Survivors of Abuse
Code of Safer Working Practice (updated 2026)

Canon (Mrs) Margaret Edwards
Parish Safeguarding Officer
March 2026

NON-STATUTORY REPORTS

GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

CHURCH CENTRE

The north door and surround and the tall north windows have been repainted. Thanks to Lee Thornton. Gutter clearing has been carried out by Forrester Access and several roof tiles replaced.

Our bid for funding to the County Council Build Back Better fund for a hot water boiler was approved; we installed a LINCAT hot water boiler like the one in the kitchenette. Thanks to Phil McLellan for organising this and Kevin Hobbs for fitting.

A new fridge has been purchased and installed in the kitchen following reliability issues with the old fridge. We also fitted vents to the tiled area in front of the fridge to improve ventilation around the fridge.

Environmental Health carried out an inspection of Lunch Club, which received a five-star hygiene certificate. Congratulations to the Lunch Club leaders and all the helpers.

We installed a key safe by the south door for use by occasional church centre hirers.

Despite these improvements, the building needs a major overhaul inside and out. We are concerned about the poor state of the fascia boards on the south-west corner and the gas meter cupboard.

STONE BUILDING

Gutter clearing has been carried out and several roof tiles replaced.

A PIR motion sensor LED light has been installed above the Stone Building door to improve visibility when entering and leaving the building at night. The sensor has been set to pick up people walking on the path, we will monitor how it is working and adjust if required. The broken lamp on the corner of the building has been replaced with a PIR motion sensor LED lamp to improve visibility on the path.

Work has been carried out on the Stone Building garden, also weeding across the site, thanks to Ruth Thornton.

YOUTH CENTRE

Last year we reported that a structural survey of the Youth Centre and Gordon Rooms was carried out by a surveyor with experience of Horsa buildings. The surveyor advised that in his view the buildings are still usable but recommended planning for their replacement in 10-15 years, providing that recommended maintenance work is carried out in the meantime. While there is no immediate danger, the surveyor advised that the risk would be increased in the event of a heavy snowfall in which case the buildings should not be used.

Following approval by PCC we have been carrying out repairs that we could do ourselves at low cost. The external column which was spalling has been treated and repaired with mortar. Sealant has been applied to all window frames on the east wall. We have replaced perished putty on the east window frames and repainted the frames. We made repairs to the internal wall in the children's toilet and repainted the wall.

During the year we had a major water leak which resulted in a swimming pool in the children's toilet. As a result, the wash basin flexible tap connectors in both toilets have been replaced. We also replaced two faulty hot water taps, and the cold water taps in the children's toilet as they were very difficult to use.

There were some issues with the drains, so we rodded through the drains from playgroup side and from 36 Larkhay Road side with the help of the new owner. This has cleared debris from the bottom of the main drain in the playgroup garden next to the footpath. Thanks to Steve Plant.

GORDON ROOMS

The Gordon Rooms are in far worse condition than the Youth Centre, and much work needs to be done. We receive an income from the building as Sportily hire the main hall to store their sporting equipment. Sportily have requested additional space but we haven't been able to do this yet.

We tidied up the Nativity on a Lorry equipment and cleared out unwanted items.

A pane of glass fell out of an east window frame because all the putty had perished. This highlighted the poor state of the windows on the east side of the building. The pane has been replaced; we have been applying new putty to prevent more panes falling out. A pane has also been replaced on the west side.

The foliage between the Gordon Rooms and Community Garden has been cleared thanks to the Community Garden team. The alleyway between the Gordon Rooms and Community Garden has been cleared and old gutters, drainpipes and rubble removed.

SITE

The annual boiler service has been carried out for the church, stone building and church centre. The annual fire extinguisher service has been carried out across all buildings. PAT testing of portable electrical appliances was carried out across all buildings except Youth Centre as Playgroup organise their own testing. Water testing has been carried out across the site.

GROUNDNS

Grass cutting was carried out by Greenfields regularly from March to October. The east side churchyard hedge was cut back in February by Greenfields.

Grounds working parties were held in February, May and October. A major section of the north hedge was cut down to ground level, a tree by the car park cut back, and lower branches removed from the yew trees which were overhanging gravestones. The car park fence has been painted. Thanks to all who helped.

The boundary fence in the community garden was repaired.

We received a complaint from a family member about the poor state of the memorial garden. Since then, the garden has been mowed by Greenfields as part of their monthly grass cut and is in good condition.

We received a request from the new owner of 36 Larkhay Road to replace the fence between the church and his property. We sought advice from Archdeacon Hilary who advised we could go ahead. The fence was installed during the school holidays.

TEAM

The Grounds and Buildings team consists of Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram, Tom Brown, Kevin Hobbs, Steve Plant and Chris Brookes. We welcome new members to join us, whatever your experience, you will be greatly valued.

Chris Brookes, Grounds and Buildings Team Chair

MISSION PARTNERSHIP

FIVE MISSION PARTNERS

2025 was another year of activity, of strengthening links and experiencing the generosity of our church congregations for which we are deeply grateful. It was the first year of implementing changes to the church mission tithe (from 10% of gross income to 5% of net income), and of introducing collections for the tithe on the 3rd Sunday of each month (both cash and digital) to coincide with the monthly Mission Partner Update. The latter seeks to focus on each of our 5 partners twice a year. We were able to fulfil our obligations through the tithe to the Pawson family in Japan and support the four remaining partners in other ways.

The five partners are as follows:

1. **The Pawson family in Japan with OMF International**

We had a re-commissioning at both services on February 9th followed by a well-supported bring and share lunch. They headed back to Japan in early March and are now pioneering in an unchurched small city called Kazuno in Akita prefecture, N.E Japan, under the leadership of a Japanese pastor couple in the neighbouring city of Odate. The Pawsons send regular prayer news, videos and WhatsApp updates and God is bringing them into contact with many people showing some degree of interest in Christianity.

2. **Revd. Helen Champion (City Deanery Youth Network Connector and our newest Mission Partnership)**

Helen led worship at Messy Church on 10th May and spoke at our joint morning service on Pentecost Sunday, 8th June 2025.

3. **Diocese of Western Tanganyika**

- 3 members of our church (Margaret Edwards, Judith Manns and Alison Dight) along with others from Gloucester diocese visited DWT from 22nd May – 30th May 2025. Each had their own area of interest and people to meet but also met with sponsored students from Lake Tanganyika Theological College and visited our link parish of Mwilanyia. They reported back at our Tanzanian Prayer Breakfast on Sat. June 21st.
- There was a diocesan wide celebration of the first women's ordination in DWT with Bishop Rachel and The Revd. Canon Dr Rebecca Lloyd on Friday 4th July in our church. We enjoyed a fabulous Tanzanian meal and were deeply moved to hear +Rachel and Rebecca's reports on taking part in this ground-breaking ordination ceremony.
- Thanks to the generosity of individuals the restricted Tanzania Fund has a healthy balance:
 - When two of our LTTC sponsored students graduated and were ordained in June, we were able to agree to sponsoring a further two, keeping the total at four.
 - £350 in total was sent to fund electric cabling at LTTC - £250 from the church and £100 from a donor.
 - We allocated £40 to fund Bibles for our four church-sponsored LTTC students, Jonas, Joshua, Debora and Lusiana. In addition, towards the end of the year, the church family had the opportunity to donate gifts for more Bibles and there was a very generous response.

4. **Gloucester City Mission**

GCM Trustee, Margaret Edwards, organized the annual Sponsored Sleep in/out in church on Friday 6th October. Most participants slept in church but one, Jackson Klein, braved a stormy night and slept in the church porch! Again, the response from sponsors was generous, raising a total of £1,313.70.

5. **Gloucester Foodbank**

- We had a focus on Gloucester Foodbank at our Harvest Celebrations on Sun Oct 20th with gifts in kind going to Foodbank.
- In total the amount donated to Gloucester Foodbank as a church in 2025 was 410kgs weight or the equivalent of 976 meals.

Philip McLellan reports on our work with the local Foodbank Hub as follows:

The hub based at St Philip & St James Church is one of six hubs of Gloucester Foodbank located throughout the city. The Hucclecote hub was the second one to be opened.

It is run by a team of volunteers whose members attend Hillview Evangelical Church, Hucclecote Methodist Church as well as St Philip & St James Church. It was established as a joint project by the Hucclecote hub of churches.

During 2025 the Foodbank hub was open every Wednesday between 11.00 and 13.00 apart from Christmas and New Years Eve. On average we supported three to four individuals or families each week. Many of these people collected three days' supply of food and toiletries by visiting the hub. We also delivered food etc to people who found it difficult to attend the hub. For those visiting the hub we seek to signpost people to our financial support team or to other agencies who can help with debt relief, benefit claims etc.

Gloucester Foodbank would like to thank St Philip & St James Church for choosing Gloucester Foodbank as one of its mission partners. We are also grateful for the individual support of church members in donating food and / or money, and for their prayers for the work of Gloucester Foodbank and people who use the Foodbank.

We are very grateful for our mission partnership team members (Alison Dight, Judith Manns, Doreen McLellan and Margaret Edwards) for all their hard work, but for all those who volunteer with GCM, the central Gloucester Foodbank and surrounding hubs, as trustees and as part of the Diocesan Team supporting the DWT link.

Revd. Miriam Davis

WORSHIP

OVERVIEW

Worship is a core activity of any church, and this sub-team seeks to help facilitate all those who play their part in helping others meet with God in song, word, and prayer. I want to thank Revd. Miriam Davis and Revd. Jane Twitty for all they have given of themselves this year, as well as Revd. Claire Greenwood for becoming part of this team in 2025. The diversity of our traditions, experiences, and perspectives is, from my point of view at least, a strength and a blessing which I know I have benefited from this year. It was also good to hear near the end of the year that Revd. Duncan Hutchison will be returning to us in February 2026 after concluding his time on Secondment to the Benefice of Hardwick and Elmore with Longney.

There is a danger, though, that the various roles and tasks within the worship life of a church fall on a few, particularly the clergy. I am thankful that so many are already involved at St Philip & St James: welcoming, music, AV & Sound, reading the readings, intercessions, those who change the Altar cloths or wash the communion linen, those who get the church ready for services and those who tidy up after them, making refreshments, sharing notices, giving mission partner updates. None of this would have been possible without the steadfast service of all of you. Thank you.

It has been good to see people finding new ways to serve and others finding new confidence in their God-given gifts. My hope and prayer is that anyone can explore how they might get involved without pressure, so that we can all find our place within the Body of Christ, using our gifts for the good of all. It would be wonderful to broaden who is involved in leading various parts of our collective worship and prayer life even further in the years ahead.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

SERVICES

Regular Sunday services have continued in 2025 with the previous pattern of two Sunday services, 8:30am Holy Communion with hymns and 10:30am contemporary worship, except on special occasions. On the third Sunday of the month, services included an update on one of our Mission Partners with the exceptions of August and December.

For the 8:30 service we have continued with the existing seasonal orders of service but added new orders of service to more appropriately mark special Sundays like Mother's Day, Palm Sunday, the Season of Creation, and Remembrance Sunday.

For the 10:30 service, the first Sunday was always an intergenerational service with more creative/interactive talks and interactive prayer activities. At many of these services, one of our young people welcomed everyone at the start of the service. This was also the primary setting for Baptisms. The second Sunday includes Holy Communion with Junior Church on this and other Sundays except during the longer School Holidays.

Starting on 26th January we added a short discussion with those around us to the start of the 10:30am service each week. Initially we worked our way through the Fruits of the Spirit, reflecting on how we might have experienced each in the previous week. Once we had been through all of them, we moved to a question set by the preacher and linked to the theme of the readings. The aim of this was to help us get more comfortable having conversations about faith.

On the second Sunday in January, we held our first joint Covenant service including Communion at 10am, with guest preacher Revd. Kate Stacey. This was a joyful opportunity to celebrate the gifts and contributions of everyone to church life over the past year and collectively commit ourselves again to God's service for the coming year. We also held joint 10am Communion service on Easter Sunday, Pentecost, Harvest, Christmas Day, and the Sunday after Christmas. While striking a balance between the different musical and liturgical styles of the two services requires thought and care, it has been good to celebrate these important days as one church family.

During September we celebrated the Season of Creation for the first time, with readings and sermons highlighting our connection to and responsibility for God's creation.

On Remembrance Sunday we only had one service at 8:30am so that those who wanted could join the Ecumenical Civic Remembrance service at the Hucclecote War Memorial, which was very well attended. I also led a short act of Remembrance at the War Memorial on Armistice Day, which was attended by Yr5 from Hillview Primary School, as well as a number of members of the public.

Other special services included:

- a service of Holy Communion with anointing with Ashes to mark Ash Wednesday at 7:30pm
- a service of Healing and Wholeness, called 'Prayers for the Journey' on 6th April at 4:30pm
- Compline on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week
- Holy Communion including foot washing on Maundy Thursday
- Taizé Evening Prayer to mark the days between Ascension and Pentecost at 7:30pm on 4th June
- Annual Memorial service at 4pm on 2nd November
- Christingle at 4pm on 6th December, which started with Christingle making in the Church Centre before moving to the Church where the Messy Voices gave us a joyful rendition of 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord'.
- Carol service on 21st December at 6pm
- Christmas Eve Crib service at 4pm where the Open the Book Team helped us tell the Christmas Story together
- Midnight Communion on Christmas Eve at 11:30pm.

So, I think it's fair to say that while the established pattern has continued, it has been embellished and complemented in ways designed to help people broaden and deepen their worship in a variety of styles and seasons.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

LIFE EVENTS

Over the course of 2025 we had 7 Baptisms (one by full immersion and 6 using the font) and 2 Weddings in church.

Members of the clergy team also led 7 Funerals in church, 15 at the Crematorium, and 5 Internment of Ashes services. A big thank you to my colleagues Revd. Miriam Davis and Revd. Jane Twitty for sharing in leading across these valuable ways that we serve our community at key moments in their lives, as well as those who have helped with services: vergers, organists, and AV vergers. Thank you also to Louisa Scrivener, our administrator, for being the first point of contact and taking care of so much of the organisation and paperwork.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

MUSIC, AV AND SOUND

Revd. Miriam Davis played the organ at the vast majority of 8:30am services, with recorded music standing in on the few occasions when she was away. Lee Thornton and Cecilia Klein did the vast majority of leading music at 10:30 with myself getting back into leading music on a few Sundays which was enjoyable. Throughout the year various other musicians joined the contemporary band. The capacity to have both traditional and contemporary styles most Sundays is a blessing, though we continue to pray for another organist to share the load with Miriam and other musicians for the band would be very welcome.

The screens and sound have continued to be diligently operated during services by a small but dedicated team who do an amazing job considering that the computer isn't really up to it and the temperamentality of Song Pro. Conversations have been ongoing through the second half of 2025 to plan for a replacement, which we hope to see come to fruition soon.

Thank you to all involved – this small but dedicated team put in a lot of hard work and our worship would not be the same without each of your contributions.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

PRAYER AND PRAYER MINISTRY

Prayer continues to be particularly important for who we are as a church. At the start of 2025, many of the patterns for regular prayer meetings continued as previously established. Most Monday mornings there is an open prayer meeting in the Stone Building 9-9:30am to start the week which has a dedicated core of people attending regularly, and a monthly evening prayer meeting, again in the Stone Building, on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm which had lower attendance. There was also a time of prayer in church on Messy Church Saturdays and on the 3rd Saturday morning of the month, with online meetings on other Saturday mornings, again with a dedicated group of regulars.

On 6th April, during Lent, there was a gentle one-off Healing and Wholeness service called 'prayers for the journey' which included time to contemplate and four prayer stations exploring letting go of baggage, how God sees us, how we see one another, and journeying together. This was a chance to reflect on the hurts and struggles of the past and talk with God about leaving them in his care.

During Holy Week we had Compline on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and on Good Friday the church was open between 10am and 3pm with a prayer station trail exploring the story of Jesus' Passion through the lens of different people who were there: Pontius Pilate, Simon of Cyrene, the Soldiers, Mary, the penitent Thief, and Joseph of Arimathea.

Following the success of the Compline (Night Prayer) services during Holy Week, which reached double digits on all three nights, the monthly Wednesday prayer meeting in June was changed to an evening prayer in Taizé style in church as part of the national 'Thy Kingdom Come' prayer initiative over the 10 days between Ascension and Pentecost. This again was much better attended, so from September onwards a trial was started to change the monthly Wednesday prayer meeting into a monthly Evening prayer service exploring different contemplative spiritualities. So far, these have

been well received by those who attend, with far more than regularly came to the meeting in the Stone Building and add something different to the mix of prayer activities regularly on offer. If this trial continues to go well in 2026 then PCC will consider in due course whether to make this change permanent.

We had a Saturday morning prayer breakfast on 18th January with a focus on the challenges of our buildings, finances, and growth. Visuals were prepared and presented by Chris Brookes, Lee Thornton, and Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram. These very helpfully opened our eyes to some of the obstacles to the growth of our church community which remain under the surface. Following each of the three presentations we prayed together using prayers on the screen. Around 40 people attended which was very encouraging and we are very grateful to those who worked hard to set up, prepare food, and present.

As we began to think about our church vision over the summer, we were all encouraged to start praying for our church, asking God who we are being called to be and what we're being called to do in the season ahead. In early September the Core youth group wrote a visioning prayer for our church, and on 20th September we launched the conversation phase of our church visioning process, facilitated by a small group of Vision Enablers and covered in prayer from start to finish. The day was a big encouragement and as the process continued through 2025, we have continued to make this a prayer priority, seeking God's will and voice as we listen and discern for the coming season.

After some time without explicit prayer ministry at services, PCC took advice from the Bishop's Advisory group on prayer and healing ministry, then discussed and developed both a policy and code of practise regarding these ministries. These were finalised and accepted in June. Training was led by Sue Rodford, a member of the advisory group, on 26th July, with the initial focus being a team to support prayer ministry on Sundays at the 10:30 service. Since September, Chris Dale has coordinated and led the team, ensuring there are two members available each week. We hope that in time to train others so that we can grow the team and provide prayer ministry at the 8:30 service too.

So, on reflection, 2025 has been a year of gently broadening the ways in which we explore prayer. Thank you for all those who help us pray, and for all those who are steadfast prayer warriors on behalf of others.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram, Chris Dale, & Revd. Miriam Davis

CHURCH FLOWERS

The team continue to meet each Friday morning to arrange flowers for our weekly services. We only had one wedding last year which requested flowers. The other wedding couple chose not have wedding flowers, but donated to the flower fund. When the church flower team are asked to provide wedding flowers, the usual pattern is the bride chooses her colour scheme and we fill the church with coordinating flowers – a wonderful welcome for her.

Our summer arrangements were very colourful as John, a church member, grows dahlias. He let us pick armfuls of these beautiful flowers for weeks and we were so happy to use them – Thank you John.

Of course, Easter, Harvest and Christmas are so special, and we always look forward to filling the church with beautiful arrangements. Thank you, team, for your continued dedication and hard work.

Jenny Barton

PASTORAL CARE

The Pastoral Care Team has been in existence for four years and although it is a small team, it is a very caring and loving group. There are several groups and activities happening within our Church life and the leaders of those groups are asked to be responsible for the care of their members in the first instance but reporting any long term or serious issues to me or the ministers.

The Pastoral Care Team aims to keep people feeling loved and connected with church life when members are not able to attend either through illness, frailty or general circumstances either temporarily or permanently. Visits are made to people's homes, care homes and hospital as needed. Holy Communion can be taken to members who request it, enabling them to feel part of the church family.

In 2025 we administered Holy Communion 119 times in private homes, care facilities and in hospitals to around 16 individuals, some regularly, others once or twice only.

Everyone in the Church has a role to play in pastoral care and can care for / phone / visit people who have not been to church or are in need. Please let Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram, Revd. Miriam Davis or me (Pat Dabbs) know if you are doing this.

All members of the fellowship are encouraged to love, care for and support each other. This is our church family and sometimes people who are attending week by week need a caring ear.

We continue to knit the small "prayer squares", embossed with a cross, that we give to our members that we visit, together with a note reminding them of God's love and our prayers. We attend the annual memorial service, being available to pray with anyone and giving the prayer squares.

A member of the team contacts bereaved families after a funeral service has taken place in the parish and on the first anniversary of the death. In 2025, 22 cards were sent at the time of the funeral and 20 cards on the anniversary. That same member also contacts children who have been baptised in church with a card on the anniversary of their baptism for 7 years. In 2025, 10 cards were sent.

Pastoral care is a privilege and a great joy getting to know members of our fellowship in greater depth, hearing the wonderful stories of their childhoods and youth. The team is dedicated and committed.

In 2025 over 200 visits were made, in addition to the Holy Communion visits above.

Please pray that God will lead our actions / visits / words / prayers, that we may be sensitive to the needs of the people being visited and their partners and that we may have the gift of love and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Pat Dabbs – Coordinator

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES

OVERVIEW

The passion of so many people across the church to see children, young people, and families grow in faith and connection has been evident again in 2025. I am deeply thankful to God for all our amazing team leaders and volunteers who between them cover such a range of age and activity, putting in their time, effort, and creativity week after week. I know that the love of God is shown in so many of these big and small efforts. Thank you all!

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

COFFEE POT

Coffee Pot is one of the church's outreach activities for pre-school children and the adults who bring them. Based in the Church Centre, we are open from 10.00am to 11.30am every Tuesday in term time. Over the last year, we have welcomed a number of new Mums with their young babies and also a small group from the Neverland Childcare nursery on the Hucclecote Road. With childminders and their children, the grans, grandads, mums and dads and their children, we are now a very bustling group – children very much outnumbering adults! Everyone takes seriously their responsibilities towards the children they bring and so each week there is a sense of enjoyment, calm and bustling activity within a safe environment.

We try to ensure that the Christian ethos is evident in all we do and say and in the ways in which we interact with everyone. Each week there is plenty of time for play, to participate in craft activities, share snacks, listen to stories and sing. Over the year we will hear a mixture of stories around a termly theme, some of which will be from the Bible. Three times last year we had short services in church – at Harvest, Christmas and Easter – led by Joe.

It is a great privilege to watch the children grow and gain confidence, as they move through different stages of their childhood. Many arrive as nervous toddlers, but gradually learn to interact with other children, share toys, play collaboratively and make their voices heard. We can also look back at the many conversations we have had with the adults who brought them: these are memories which remain.

Coffee Pot could not run without its team of volunteers – Rhianydd Warren, Linda Weedon, Susan Taylor, Josie Cumberbatch and Pat Peachey – thank you all for your commitment week by week and for your care of our families.

Peggy Brown

TEDDY BEARS TODDLER GROUP

2025 has been another busy year for our Teddy Bears Toddler group, with a regular 15 or more families attending each Friday morning, in term time. Some of the older toddlers are getting a little boisterous as they are more than ready for school, so we are glad of the Playdough table and some challenging jigsaws and the regular craft activities to keep them engaged and busy. They all sit fairly quietly for story time, when our brave volunteers create some actions as Susan reads the story. We follow this with a short reflection, usually about God's love and a little prayer and as soon as we say AMEN, the children dash to the tables to get their snacks and drinks. The sessions always end with singing accompanied by very loud percussion instruments.

Once again, I would like to express thanks to the team of helpers: Kay Galling, Chris Scourfield, Susan Taylor, Wendy Vickers, Rhianydd Warren, for their loyalty and dedication. During the year we gained a new volunteer, Ann Harrison, who was a previous member of staff at the Pineholt Hall. Thank you also to the faithful church members who regularly offer prayers for the group as we are meeting. All the support for Teddy Bears is much appreciated.

Margaret Edwards & team

CORE GROUP

Core group meets monthly, usually on the second Sunday afternoon of the month 4:30-6:30pm and is open to young people who are of secondary school or college age. The aim is to provide a place where the young people can share fellowship, friendship, and discuss faith.

At the start of 2025 there were 4 members, with Brian Trott and Chris Scourfield leading. During this time, the group continued meeting at the March Hare café. Joe took over from Brian after Easter with the group shifting to meet at St. Philip & St. James Church, usually in the Stone Building.

From January to March the group explored some sessions of the 'Difference' course. In late Spring we explored a few of the NOOMA short videos as discussion prompts, then had pizza, games, and chat as our last session before the Summer. In September the group gained another member and talked about the church visioning process and wrote the visioning prayer for the church. In October we met in the Community Garden to toast marshmallows around a fire-pit, carve Christian symbols into pumpkins, and talk about what it means to be a follower of Jesus. In November we had a deep discussion about Heaven & Hell, belief & doubt, while in December we talked about Christmas traditions and had festive snacks.

It continues to be a privilege and joy to lead this group. We are excited to see these young people grow in faith, confidence, and to explore the gifts that God has given each one. Thank you to Brian for all he did to invest in these amazing young people and develop Core group.

Rev. Dr. Joe Mottram & Chris Scourfield

MESSY CHURCH

We can look back on another happy year of Messy Church. Pop in any second Saturday of the month and you will see children wandering around the church, inspecting the craft tables and trying to decide which one they will start with – something glittery, something wet or something they can eat. The numbers of guests varied throughout the year from 48 to 87 with a good crowd of regulars but also new families as well. There's always a happy buzz of sound with some squeaks of excitement. While the children are occupied parents can enjoy a hot drink and home-made cake while they chat. We are blessed with a neighbour of the church calling in with fresh cake every month.

At the beginning of the year the story of the persistent neighbour knocking for bread prompted a sharing of "Knock, knock" jokes! The Story of the Sower produced not just plants but also a scarecrow for the Community Garden. The re-telling of the Easter story using Smarties meant that as well using the colours to think about each part of the story we could take some home to eat them. In May we had lots of fishy activities to go with Revd. Helen's story about sorting the good from the bad fish that were caught in the net. Sometimes an activity doesn't go to plan. The adults couldn't get the water bird whistle to - well – whistle - on Mustard Seed Saturday. Until one of the boys came along and did it straightaway. For the Hidden Treasure story, the children stuck a little cross in the bottom of a heart-shaped box to remind them that having Jesus in our hearts is the greatest treasure of all. Our Autumn themes of love brought us the story of the prodigal son to express the theme of Love God and cakes decorated with pink pig faces were very popular. For Love your World we were blessed with a confident talk on caring for our world by Siena. The good Samaritan story helped us to explore the theme Love Your Neighbour. The teddies were cared for in the Teddy Hospital, and the cookie man was well bandaged with fondant icing bandages. The worse the injuries, the tastier the cookie!

None of this fun and happy time would happen without our stalwart band of helpers who deal with everything that is presented to them and don't rush away at the end but stay and clear everything up getting the church ready for Sunday morning. A big thank you to you all!

Judy Preece & Dianne Brookes

OPEN THE BOOK

The Open the Book team of Philip Wenham, Jane Twitty, Judy Preece, Margaret Edwards, Chris and Dianne Brookes present Bible stories weekly in Hillview Primary School.

At the beginning of the year, we were part way through Year 1 of the programme which gives a chronological overview of the bible through selected stories. We were still in the Old Testament and started with the lovely story of Naomi and Ruth with the children being the gleaners picking up the dried grass bunny tails from the floor. We learnt our lesson from the last time we did it when we scattered puffed wheat and forgot about the school dogs who came in and started to eat it! We love the children taking part especially when the message is that God speaks to children (Samuel) and chooses them for a special job (David).

Into the New Testament and more presenting challenges. We already had a large cardboard boat for Jesus to commandeer from a nearby fishermen, but when the catch of fish was too big, we needed a second one. A quick search for a super large box and another boat was made so that Philip plus his crew of children could 'row' onto the lake and rescue the catch. Tricky but successful!

Another boat needed for 'The Storm on the Lake' and we asked all the children to rock from side to side as if they were in the storm. They did well in spite of Chris making sick noises over the side of the boat!

During the year we acquired some super pre-printed child-size tabards which have been so good for the children's dressing up. They have also loved the swords, Roman helmets, pig masks, black feather raven headdresses and even being the walls of the two houses and falling down when prompted. Each story usually has words (on cards) that they call out when prompted so that everyone feels part of the action.

We enjoy telling the stories in ways that enable the children to engage imaginatively with the text. We pray that Open the Book will give them a store of Bible stories that will lodge in their memories and increase their understanding of the Christian faith. As a team we love these stories and are blessed to share them in this way.

Dianne Brookes

SCHOOL AND PRE-SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

In the first part of 2025 a toddler service for Easter was held with parents and children from our own Coffee Pot & Teddy Bears as well as from Neverland Childcare, Abbeymead Under 5's, and Hucclecote Playgroup next to Dinglewell Infant and Junior Schools. We again hosted the Abbeymead Under 5's Nativity, and toddler services were also held at Harvest and Christmas, though Abbeymead Under 5's and Hucclecote Playgroup weren't able to attend on those occasions.

That did, however, lead to my being invited to visit Hucclecote Playgroup and talk briefly to the children about Harvest and Christmas. While efforts to (re-)build links with Dinglewell Infants and Juniors have so far not seen much progress, despite much prayer and a number of attempts, it is encouraging to see the link with Hucclecote Playgroup, which was there before Covid, being re-established.

Connections with Hillview Primary school also strengthened throughout 2025. We offered to host an Easter service for Hillview Primary School, but this unfortunately fell through the cracks. However, this led to better coordination for the 2025/26 academic year and my going into Hillview Primary school to lead assemblies on 'the Season of Creation' and 'What is Harvest?' in October, 'What is Advent?' in November and 'What is Nativity?' in December. I attended the Year 5 assembly on Remembrance Day and led the class in a short public Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial at 11am. The class then helped to place poppy wreaths on the war graves in our churchyard afterwards, accompanied by myself and two former servicemen who had independently come to the war memorial to mark Remembrance Day. We also hosted Key stage 2 (Yr 3-6) services at church for Harvest and Christingle, and I attended the Reception & Key stage 1 (Yrs 1 & 2) Christingle at the school.

Overall, there has been plenty to thank God for, and relationships have been strengthened with both staff and children at local pre-schools and Hillview Primary School over 2025. There are a number of dates already in the diary for 2026, and the prospect of building further on what has gone well this year.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

JUNIOR CHURCH

During 2025, the leaders of Junior Church have continued to use the Scripture Union book for Primary aged children (5–8-year-olds), which gives an outline of Sunday School lessons, with ideas for craft and puzzles, as well as the appropriate Bible story for a particular week. Since the age range of the children and young people who attend on a Sunday can be from age 3 years to almost 16, the content of the weekly lessons in this resource, is far from ideal. As leaders we often struggle to be creative in expanding what is in the book in order to allow each young person to be engaged and grow in their faith.

If we had more volunteers to help, we could have two groups, which would allow the older ones to have a discussion time, which they love and could be very rewarding for potential volunteers too. If you feel you can help in this way, please speak to Joe, or a member of the team.

Many thanks to all who give up their time to prepare for Junior Church on a Sunday morning and to those helping with the sessions on the three Sundays per month, when the young people leave the service for their own time in the Church Centre.

Margaret Edwards (plus Pat Dabbs, Doreen McLellan, Judy Preece, Tina Knight, Judith Manns, Chris Scourfield)

BOARD GAMES GROUP

This new initiative started in January 2025 as an attempted outreach where we play board games in the church centre on the first Sunday of the month, 2-4pm. It was started with a hope to build connections with families, particularly as a collective activity which is screen-free and supports the development of good sportsmanship, but we welcome people of all ages.

The purchase of an initial set of games was supported by a grant from the Mears foundation, for which we are very grateful. We are also grateful to members of the church who came to help with refreshments and provide an extra safeguarding-trained adult when needed.

The sessions have been thoroughly enjoyed and keenly anticipated by those who come. However, despite advertising regularly both physically and online, numbers have not been particularly high, with the regular attenders numbering only 6. Jackson also tried running simple games at Messy Church during the Autumn to raise awareness, and while there has been a lot of interest and enjoyment from both adults and children, this has yet to translate into attendance at the group itself. We intend to continue to at least summer 2026 but will take stock after Easter about the second half of the year.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram and Jackson Klein

DISCIPLESHIP

OVERVIEW

Discipleship takes place in a wide variety of activities and contexts across the various activities, services, and groups of our church through talks & sermons, discussions and conversation, explicit and informal teaching. In essence we are all discipling one another, whether we think of it that way or not.

The vision of the discipleship sub-team is to develop, implement, and oversee strategies and programmes that promote spiritual growth, biblical literacy, and a deeper commitment to Christ by fostering a culture of lifelong discipleship, equipping believers to live out their faith in all areas of life and to make disciples of others.

I am encouraged by all that has happened in 2025, and I hope you are too. I'd like to thank all those who contribute time, energy, and gifts to planning and leading, so enabling us to put this vision into practice. Thanks also to everyone who engages in whatever way in courses and discussions as we walk this journey together with one another and Jesus. While this task is never complete this side of eternity, I hope that in what people experience and from reading the sections below, we see signs of this vision becoming a reality.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

HOME GROUPS

Four home groups met regularly for Bible study and fellowship throughout 2025. Three groups met in the evening – two on Thursdays and one on Tuesday. The Tuesday evening group, led by Chris and Dianne Brookes, met on Zoom with an occasional in-person social. The Thursday group co-ordinated by Marion Cook met mainly on Zoom until summer, then transitioned to in-person meetings at Marion's house or in the Stone Building. The Thursday evening led by Paul Springham and Chris Scourfield met at Rachel Cooke's home. The Wednesday afternoon group met at 2:30pm until the summer, then at 2pm from September, in the Church Centre Kitchen.

Chris and Dianne Brookes write: We started the year with *100 Stand Alone Bible Studies*, then in Lent we studied *Living Hope, A Lent Journey*. After Easter we studied *The Good Book Guide to Acts 1-12*, then paused to spend several months discussing the vision process. Towards the end of the year, we looked at four talks on Advent from *100 Stand Alone Bible Studies*. In July we went for a home group away day at Harnhill Centre. In August we enjoyed a home group tea in Jane Stock's garden.

Marion Cook writes: 4 of us took it in turns to lead the studies - Pat Dabbs, Steve Pack and Doreen McLellan and myself. We studied *The Psalms*, *The Uniqueness of Faith* by Selwyn Hughes (very good) and *Romans 1- 7* by T Keller.

Thursday evening group: This group met at Rachel Cooke's house and saw one of its newer members leading Bible studies in 2025 with great enthusiasm, discovering many new insights into the Bible.

Wednesday afternoon group: This group moved to a team of four in leadership from April 2025 – Philip Wenham, Sue Delaney, Revd. Claire Greenwood and Revd. Miriam Davis. The year started with studies in Psalms from a *Lifebuilder* resource; during Lent we looked at *the Prayers of Jesus*; the summer term focused on *1 and 2 Peter*; and the autumn was on *Luke*. We wondered if the group would remain viable as members had to drop out for health or other reasons, but it was strengthened by two new members from the START course in September. Occasionally we joined in with Mothers' Union meetings; on Ash Wednesday (talk by Miriam); when Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram shared about his spiritual journey; and when Revd. Robin Greenwood spoke about St Francis. In the summer we had an afternoon social in the community garden and in December, as in previous years, visited Pam Henning to celebrate Christmas with her.

A big thanks to all our group leaders. All groups are open to newcomers and are a great way of supporting one another and deepening our faith. Please speak to Miriam or Joe if you are interested in joining a group. We add regularly to the Bible study resources for home groups (also great for individual use) on the shelves in the outer office of the Stone Building, and anyone is welcome to borrow these for personal or group use.

Revd. Miriam Davis

COURSES

Revd. Miriam Davis ran the 6-week START course twice in 2025. The first course began on June 11th at 11am on Wednesdays in the church which meant that some attendees were able to enjoy a cuppa at 'Tea and Toast' beforehand. It was attended by two newcomers to Christian faith, but several established church members also joined, either to help facilitate or for their own spiritual growth. We enjoyed the video clips, had lively and thought-provoking discussions and a lot of fun! New friendships were formed and there was a great desire to continue after the six weeks. We did this until mid-August when holidays intervened, looking at 3 studies from Rebecca Manley Pippert's '*Uncovering the life of Jesus – Six encounters with Jesus from the Gospel of Luke.*' We supplemented the studies with video clips from various internet sources of the Bible passages we were studying. In September, our two newcomers were warmly welcomed into our Wednesday afternoon Bible study group.

The second START course ran during the autumn on a Friday morning as and when the four participants were available. Miriam was very grateful to Sam Claffey and Sue Delaney for their help in facilitating. On two Fridays when our other participant was unable to come at the last minute, Sam, Sue and Miriam looked at two studies from the follow-up MOVING ON course which focuses on becoming a disciple and living as a Christian. At the end of the year, it was a joy to hear two of our 2025 START participants express a desire to be confirmed.

We also ran the Bible course by the Bible Society as a joint venture with Upton St. Leonards Parish. This was led by Revd. Joe Mottram and Revd. Helen Champion over 8 weeks starting in Lent in March and continuing after Easter in May, hosted in Upton St Leonards. We used the 3rd Edition as the revision wasn't available in time for the start of the course. It is designed to help people explore the big picture of the Bible with a video and discussion format. There was a good mix of people from both parishes, mostly existing congregation members but it also enabled one or two who were less regular to reconnect. Thank you to Helen and Upton St Leonards for their hospitality.

Revd. Miriam Davis & Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

PREPARATION FOR BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS, AND CONFIRMATION

In 2025 we had 7 Baptisms, four for infants, two for young children between the ages of 1 and 4, and one of a 5-year-old by full immersion. In all cases there were preparation conversations with the parents, and all the services were

conducted as part of the 10:30 Sunday morning service on the 1st Sunday of the month. Each was a source of celebration and the warmth of the welcome they received from the church was commented upon regularly.

While I raised the question of confirmation in early 2025 there were no expressions of interest at that time. However, two people expressed an interest later in the year, so we have applied to host a service in 2026.

We had two weddings in 2025, both of which were for couples who attend other churches but live within our parish and so both the preparation and services themselves had a collaborative, ecumenical aspect to them. In addition to preparation connected to their regular church, I had three meetings with each couple and at the first provided a home-grown 'Our Marriage Matters' booklet for the couples to look at both separately and together. In both cases this was well received and raised one or two things that were then discussed at the second meeting. It was a joy and privilege to accompany both couples on their journey and encouraging to hear and see how important God is in their lives and relationships. Working with the leaders of other churches also worked well. Many thanks to those who helped with these services, including vergers, AV vergers, musicians and the flower team who did a fantastic job on both occasions.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

HUCCLECOTE COMMUNITY GARDEN

2025 was a year of change in the garden. We continued with the necessary work to make it a safe and accessible place for all, such as laying a new path from the car park that is wide enough for double buggies and wheelchairs. We also cleared the alleyway between the garden's boundary on the west side and the Gordon Rooms, removing the dilapidated fencing and incorporating the extra space into the garden. Both of these were major projects and relied hugely on the work of several volunteers.

With the structural work largely completed, we were keen to encourage individuals and groups to make more use of the garden. We held a very successful open morning in June, selling garden produce, plants and bric-a-brac and providing teas and cakes to about a hundred visitors. As well as its usual opening hours on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons, the garden was open on two days in July as part of Hucclecote Open Gardens in support of the local Guides. We also experimented with additional opening hours in the school holidays and had some extra visitors. Two church groups used the garden for the first time: the CORE Group met there in the summer when they enjoyed having a fire pit, and the Lunch Club volunteers held their annual get-together there in August.

The garden continued to be a place of fellowship and friendship. We welcomed up to twenty people a session on Tuesdays and Thursdays, while those with raised beds could come outside of these hours to cultivate their plot. It was encouraging to see the variety of vegetables grown and harvested in the beds, as well as the range of ages of the gardeners; from three years to over ninety! The vegetable garden did well in spite of a lack of water over the summer. The fruit garden thrived in the hot sunny weather, the damson tree having perhaps its best year ever.

The workshop in the garden, now named 'Hucclecote Crafters', went from strength to strength in 2025. It was fully kitted out with woodworking tools, and electricity was installed thanks to grants from EDF and the Rotary Club of Gloucester. As well as their own projects, the Crafters worked on ones for the garden. They made a plant display board from a pallet, and then enthusiastically took up the challenge of building a costermonger's barrow to show off our plants and produce.

We have learnt much over the last five years and it was therefore heartening to be asked to take part in a survey commissioned by the Royal Horticultural Society to assess the impact and development of community gardens. Its resulting report 'Space to Grow' highlights the importance of such places for individual and community physical and mental health and well-being; something that we have experienced in this special place.

Alison Dight, Alan Preece

LUNCH CLUB

During 2025 Lunch Club has met on twenty-three occasions and has served 434 meals to our regular group of guests.

Six guests are members of St. Philip & St. James while some attend other local churches. Everyone is kept informed as to what is happening in our church and many come and support what we do here. Over the year we have said goodbye to one or two guests and have also welcomed new faces.

Guests enjoy coming so much that they seem to come into the centre earlier than ever in order to enjoy meeting up and engaging in conversation. As one guest has said, "My only regret about Lunch Club is how dearly I wish I had come to it sooner." As well as always enjoying a delicious meal and dessert, it is the opportunity to enjoy company together which is so important and appreciated. This is a comment we frequently hear from family members. One of our gentlemen always takes a copy of the menu home with him to show to his family when he sees them!

At Christmas, Mrs. Armstrong (head teacher) was able to bring the Hillview School choir to sing some traditional Christmas carols to us, and many were able to join in with them. The children were each given a small Christmas stocking as a thank you. My thanks to the team of cooks who served our Christmas meal, and to all the Lunch Club team for their work throughout the year.

On a practical note, Lunch Club was re-inspected in the Autumn and has retained its 5-star Food Hygiene rating, and the other wonderful news is that as a result of an application from church to the County Council, the Thriving Communities Grant approved the purchase of a new electric, induction hob cooker. No more singed eyebrows! It can't come soon enough!

Margaret Wenham
On behalf of the Lunch Club team

TUESDAY @ TWO 2025

Tuesday @ Two has celebrated another successful year, having met fortnightly with a regular group of some sixteen/seventeen coming together for a time of companionship whilst enjoying playing canasta and various board games. During the year we have welcomed four new members.

We have six members from church whilst many others have supported church outreach events and activities.

We also seem to have become a book and jig-saw puzzle lending and swapping service!

Our afternoons are never complete without everyone sitting down to enjoy conversation and a welcome cup of tea with a slice of home-made cake.

If anyone would like to come and join us, you would be most welcome. We can always fit you in.

Margaret & Philip Wenham

TEA AND TOAST

Having re-branded as Tea and Toast in 2024 the original plan was to open from September to March. However, the 'new' group proved popular, and, after discussion, it was decided that we should open all year round. This has been well received, and on average, 18 people attend each week.

One week in each month of April and May we were joined by a group from Hillview Evangelical Church while building work was taking place there.

We remained open in August and over the Christmas/New Year holiday, when other groups are often closed, and this proved to be very popular.

Thanks are due to Shelley Stuart and Judith Manns, who faithfully help to run the group.

Doreen McLellan

C.A.M.E.O (Come And Meet Each Other)

CAMEO has had a very good year with varied speakers. We've had a Victorian seaside costume show, have been taken to the Kimberley's in Australia and learnt about the universe when our own vicar Joe talked about how he became an Astronomer and his passion about stars and space.

We were treated to an evening of song with Gloucester District Christian Choir, a wonderful evening raising a considerable amount of money for our charity The Butterfly Garden.

With the sun shining we were able to look around the Community Garden where Alison told us all about it. A wonderful afternoon tea at Trioscape Garden Centre was our summer outing and in September the Gloucester Film Company came and showed us films they had taken of old Gloucester over the years. We were privileged to have them as this was their last film show before retiring.

Our Christmas celebrations finished the year with 'curling', a fun time was had by all.

We meet every third Wednesday of the month and would welcome any new members.

Jenny Barton

HUCCLECOTE ECUMENICAL HUB REPORT

The Hucclecote Hub is an ecumenical partnership between the three churches in Hucclecote: St. Philip & St. James Church of England Church, Hucclecote Methodist Church, and Hillview Evangelical Church. Representatives meet several times a year to pray together and plan joint activities. There is a genuine sense of partnership in the Gospel and a focus on what unites us rather than our differences.

Hucclecote Hub initiatives in 2025 consisted of:

- The Foodbank hub, hosted by our church in the church centre but staffed by volunteers from all three churches (see separate report).
- Coordinating and supplying 'It's your move' Scripture Union booklets to all Year 6 pupils at Hillview Primary School and Dinglewell Junior School to support their transition to Secondary School.
- Coordinating and leading the Ecumenical Civic Service of Remembrance at the Hucclecote War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday.
- Producing and distributing a leaflet detailing the Christmas services from all three churches, a short message from one of the lead ministers, and the details of Nativity on a Lorry.
- Putting on Nativity on a Lorry for the 2 nights in Hucclecote, where volunteers create a Crib scene on the back of a rented flat-bed truck and tour around local streets with others giving out chocolates and wishing people a Merry Christmas on behalf of the three churches. The Hub also leads the organisation and coordination for other local churches. This year it included Coopers Edge Community Church, Christchurch Abbeydale, St Oswalds Coney Hill, and Upton St Leonards.

Each of these events went well this year, witnessing to our shared faith in Jesus and engaging with our local community. The Remembrance service drew large crowds, and NOAL was well received again this year.

We talked about doing something together as part of the 'Thy Kingdom Come' initiative between Ascension and Pentecost in 2025 but ran out of time. However, we agreed in October 2025 to begin planning joint activities in 2026 – something to look forward to!

In the Autumn of 2025, we also began exploring contributing a monthly 'thought for the month' to the local Hucclecote Link magazine, with the author rotating between the three churches. Unfortunately, my entry submitted for December didn't make it into print, but we have high hopes for 2026.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help with the various activities, and Margaret Edwards and Philip McLellan who, with myself, act as representatives for our church at Hub meetings. Particular thanks go to Mike Webber of Hillview Church who does so much organising behind the scenes and champions collaboration between our three churches.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING

The Fund Raising and Events team was established this year. It replaces the former Social Team so that there is some co-ordination, not just for social but for all church events. There were a range of events held during the year, including a quiz night, a prayer breakfast, a concert which made a profit of £320. and the Christmas Make-It, which were all held in the church. We also joined with the other churches in Hucclecote at the Carols in the Pub event. These events provided opportunities to engage with the local community, for church members to share together and to raise much needed funds for our church,

Bring and share meals were also held. They continue to be popular and are well attended.

Thanks are due to the members of the team – Rachel Cooke, Ruth Thornton and Rhianydd Warren.

Doreen McLellan

COMMUNICATION

We have worked hard to keep our www.hucclecotechurch.uk (A Church Near You (ACNY)) up to date with details of all the services. We added some new sections, notably, pages on the *Vision Process* and a *Venues for Hire* section with fully revised and expanded documents with photos. From the summer we displayed a banner on the railings by the carpark entrance advertising our *Venues for Hire*. This is clearly visible to the considerable traffic along Larkhay Road and has a QR code directing people directly to the relevant section of the website.

During the year we uploaded 13 articles to the ACNY News Section, written by Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram, Revd. Miriam Davis, and Jane Stock: two relating to our mission partners in Japan and Tanzania; others featuring church groups such as the flower team or sharing the testimony of someone who participated in a START group; several on seasonal events such as Mothering Sunday, Easter, a Pentecost prayer walk to the Cathedral, Creation Sunday, the annual memorial service and Christingle.

In December we uploaded the first *Thought for the Month* written by Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram for the *Hucclecote Link* magazine. This was also posted to our church Facebook and local Facebook noticeboards, although it did not make it into the magazine in the end due to lack of space. However, during 2025 the editor advertised a number of special events for us and showed willingness to include a brief '*Thought for the Month*' for free when there is space (to be written by Hucclecote Hub church leaders in turn).

There is still much work to be done with our website in several areas and the Church of England team behind it are making improvements all the time. But it is making an impact even as it is. Statistics show over a thousand views a week, and initial enquiries for baptisms and weddings often come first to the office via both the website and Facebook. We have 388 followers of our Facebook page (although there is no knowing who views our posts regularly and some may not be local), but with forwarding of posts to local FB noticeboards there is considerable reach, albeit probably not to younger generations. Our church Instagram account has a very low profile in comparison.

During 2025 we started using the ChurchSuite computer system to create a database of church members, and to send out emails to members of our distribution list. This made sending out these emails much easier and less time consuming. At the end of 2025, there were 118 members in this email distribution list.

A weekly notice sheet continues to be created, which includes the readings for the forthcoming service, a prayer list, weekly calendar of events and details of regular groups. This is printed for church and emailed to our church distribution list.

As well as the weekly notice sheet, we also regularly send out our posters for events and services and any other relevant information about our church or our mission partners, as well as all the articles posted on ACNY. This all ensures that regular contact is maintained with these members of the church and wider community.

Revd. Miriam Davis and Louisa Scrivener

SPECIAL PROJECTS INCLUDING GRANT APPLICATIONS

OVERVIEW

This new sub-team area works on an as-needed basis, with relevant people brought together to focus on special projects. In 2025 most of the special projects that needed such a team were around grant applications, primarily under the organisation of members of the Grounds & Buildings team, with the addition of Phil McLellan on a couple of occasions to support grant applications. The other notable special project was around the ongoing church vision process. Details are given below. I anticipate that the need for other special projects teams may well emerge in the coming years.

My thanks to Chris Brookes for all his work getting quotes, writing the bids, and coordinating with the diocese on the grant applications for the church; to Phil McLellan for his eagle eyes in spotting several opportunities and in writing the grant applications for the new cooker and hot water heater for the church centre kitchen: and to Kevin Hobbs for all his time and effort, in both the planning and the practical aspects of many of these tasks. None of these would have happened without you and they have already made a big impact, both practically and in building a positive sense of progress and improvement around these aspects of church life.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram

GRANTS REPORT

In January we noticed an opportunity in the Diocese of Gloucester Weekly Bulletin to apply for a grant under the Diocesan Minor Improvements Scheme. The scheme provided partial funding for churches to carry out minor works in their church buildings up to a maximum of £10k. Although we have a lot of work that needs doing, there was limited time to get quotes and apply. Thankfully we already had a quote from SDL Stained Glass for refurbishment of the single vent window in the church north aisle and fitting of black polyester powder coated stainless steel window guards on both vented windows. This is one of the 2021 Quinquennial Report recommendations. Our application was successful and we received a grant of £1,152 which was 40% of the costs. Refurbishment of the vent has further improved ventilation in

the church building. The window guards protect the glass from external breakage and allow considerably more light into the church.

A further opportunity arose later in the year to apply for a grant under the Diocesan Net Zero Quick Wins scheme. The purpose of this scheme was to encourage churches to replace their old quartz halogen bulbs and fluorescent tubes with LED alternatives, thereby reducing their electricity usage. The grant was limited to church buildings. It took some effort to source LED bulbs for our spotlights; we had to try a few options before we found bulbs that were suitable. Our grant application was successful, we were awarded the full cost £1,282 of the LED lights, so we only had to pay for hire of a scaffold tower. The work was led by Kevin Hobbs with the support of a large team of volunteers from our church family. The quartz halogen floodlights in the north aisle and chancel have been replaced by 30w LED floodlights; the floodlights in the roof space by 50w LED floodlights. For the spotlights we replaced all the bulbs with 10w LED bulbs. The lights in the vestry, inner vestry and toilet were replaced with LED alternatives. LED bulbs were also fitted in the four outdoor dusk to dawn lights and the porch light. The LED lighting uses a fraction of the power of our old lights, significantly reducing our electricity bill.

Phil McLellan spotted an opportunity to apply for funding under the County Council Build Back Better fund for organisations looking to improve the facilities they can provide to the public. Following a brief consultation with Lunch Club and Tea and Toast teams, it was decided to apply for funding for a hot water boiler for the church centre kitchen. Our bid for £551 was approved; we installed a LINCAT hot water boiler like the one in the church kitchenette. This is a big improvement on using kettles. Thanks to Phil for organising the bid and Kevin Hobbs for fitting.

Later in the year Phil noticed a further opportunity to apply for funding under the County Council Thriving Communities grant, up to a maximum of £7,500. Following another consultation with various teams including the Lunch Club and Tea and Toast teams, it was decided to apply for funding for a new induction range hob and fan assisted oven for the church centre kitchen to replace the old gas cooker. We also included in our bid the cost of fitting an additional consumer unit and cabling to provide the electrical supply needed, total amount £5,616. We heard just before Christmas that our bid was successful; we have since ordered the oven for installation in the new year. Many thanks to Phil McLellan, Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram and Kevin Hobbs for preparing the application.

Chris Brookes, Kevin Hobbs and Phil McLellan

CHURCH VISION

Visioning is the process of seeking and discerning where God is leading us, who and what God is calling St Philip & St James Church to be and look like in the coming years. Through this process we are seeking big picture hopes and dreams but also mapping out how we plan to get there from where we are today.

This was the opening paragraph of a document I presented to PCC in July 2025 as we discussed starting a visioning process. It became clear during our conversation that we wanted to use a conversational approach, deeply rooted and covered in prayer, to be as open as possible to listen to God, one another, and our community. The hope was and is that as many people as possible will want to be part of this across our congregations, communities, and beyond, so that together we can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

We focused this around three questions/areas:

1. Where are things now for St Philip & St James Church, Hucclecote?
2. Who and what is God calling us to be and do?
3. What big or personal questions are people wrestling with?

To aid these conversations we formed a small team of Vision Enablers (Sue Delaney, Margaret Edwards, Revd. Robin & Revd. Claire Greenwood, Allan Butcher, and myself) who facilitated conversations at the prayer breakfast in September and with various groups throughout the Autumn. There was also a board in church encouraging responses and a vision prayer, written by the Core youth group, was used regularly in services and meetings.

In early 2026, a small group will be identified by PCC to meet, collate the responses, and begin to discern common threads to take back to the congregation in draft form, hopefully before the end of March. Following further consultation and polishing, our aim is to have a finalised church vision by Pentecost.

My thanks to PCC, the Vision Enablers, and everyone who has engaged so prayerfully in this process so far. I am excited to see what emerges and where God is leading us in the coming season.

Revd. Dr. Joe Mottram