



ANNUAL REVIEW OF HOLY TRINITY AND ST ANDREW'S CHURCHES COMBE DOWN FOR THE YEAR TO APRIL 2024

CLERGY REPORTS:

This has been another hugely encouraging year, with new people joining, and HTCD and StACC regularly at near capacity. The Community Centre at St Andrews opened in May, which provides additional space for numerous activities, and in January a new evening service, The 6 was launched at Holy Trinity, regularly attracting up to 100 people.

The various ministries of the church flourish and are a regular source of joy, particularly those aimed at people from outside our regular congregations, such as 'Pilates and Poetry' (led by Katy), 'Dads, Kids Coffee and Bacon' once a month in Holy Trinity, which attracts some non-church dads and their toddlers, and the 'St Andrews Toddlers' on Tuesday mornings, among many others. The reports below give a snapshot of some of the many aspects of church life.

We say goodbye to Katy Partridge as she finishes her curacy and moves to St Mary's Southampton as Associate Minister. Ben Notley joined us in February as our new curate.

Chris Absolon has finished his curacy and will be licensed on 19 May as Associate Minister, with responsibility for St James, South Stoke.

We are very grateful to the Lord for all He has done and is doing amongst us, and we give Him all the glory! We are also thankful to our staff team and volunteers, and to everyone who plays their part in our churches. We look forward to the next season in our church life with anticipation.

Malc Morgan – Senior Associate Minister for St Andrews Community Church writes:

The last year has seen continued growth at St Andrew's. Regular attendance is now up at eighty a week. The children's work has flourished after re-starting last year – up to eighteen children a week are now being looked after and taught in our Sunday groups.

Times of worship are precious at STACC and as the team has grown so the worship has deepened and 'body ministry' now happens regularly. The Preaching Matters course started by Shawn and Tim has really helped some of our developing ministers here as well. A monthly prayer meeting has been re-established at church to underpin all our work.

The Community Centre re-opened in May and as well as hosting our youth, Sunday children's groups and various 'in house' events, is now being used widely by the community. Parties, Counselling, Council

support groups, Family groups, a Refugee support group and an Artists group are all using the building. We are still in the process of developing the facility, but it is an amazing extra space for us to use.

Our regular support into the community is growing with Toddlers often at maximum numbers and Focus lunches now catering for over 50 local guests weekly. With groups such as the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Bath Society of Botanical Artists, Bath Multiples group (parents with twins+) Southside Charity, Aphasia Choir, Combe Down Choir using our main building weekly there is never a dull moment in the building! We have also established sessions where the Council, Curo and our local councilors regularly meet with local people to discuss on-going problems in the Foxhill estate. StAction Day (a big clean up in the community) still occurs as well as many other initiatives throughout the year. A recent social event 'a ceilidh' was well received with over 80 attending.

Finally, heartfelt thanks must be made to our many, many volunteers throughout the week, to the donators of food for our pantry, to our home group leaders and Sunday school teachers who all contribute so much to the work here. It couldn't happen without you – thank you all!

Katy Partridge – Curate writes:

Since last year's report, we have launched a new Sunday service at Holy Trinity. The values of The Six are about creating time and space to go deeper, so the service follows the format of a longer set of worship, followed by a distinct sermon series, and extended time to respond in prayer. This service is open to everyone, and we have particularly encouraged our young people to join. We have had a great first term, and now the service is really beginning to have its own shape and identity.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for being an incredible church to be part of during my curacy! I arrived here in July 2021, and very sadly my curacy has now come to an end. I will be starting as Associate Minister at St Mary's in Southampton. My licensing is on Wednesday 5th June at 7.30pm, please do come along if you would like to.

MINISTRY REPORTS

Worship – Dan Collison writes:

Worship at Holy Trinity has been a growth area this past year. We've spent time working together with Trish and the team at StACC, we've had new leaders and team coming on board, and we've seen people genuinely engaging in the times of sung worship across both morning services.

The launch of the Six has been challenging, as we work to find its distinctive flavour and resource it (and it's at a very awkward time for most of our current leaders!), but there have been moments where God is moving.

Our new Worship Leader Aine McLachlan is going to start this June with the amazing foundation of a strong team of musicians and tech team. We are excited to remain part of the worship team as she takes over the leadership and to see how God is going to use her and the amazingly gifted team we have going forward.

Children's Minister – Claire Morrish writes:

This year our Sunday congregation of children has continued to grow and we have topped 50 children under 11 years of age on quite a number of Sundays. We are particularly blessed with babies and have had to look at new ways to accommodate the under 3's as our Jonah's crew room is way too small for the 25 under 3's now registered with us.

As always, my constant prayer is for more help, working with children is so joyous, so please email children@htcd.church if you could serve in anyway with our children's ministry.

Ministry for Schools continues to be strong, the whole of Combe Down School now come to church weekly for 'Open the Book' and Mulberry Park School have joined us for both the Christmas and Easter Experiences. I now run an Open the Book lunch club in Combe Down school which is a bible study and prayer group and although small has been the place for deep conversations.

The 'Thankful Thursdays' congregation has doubled this year with 16 families being the average attendance now, it is still my most joyful moment in the week and it has been lovely to overlap with the Thursday service congregation, making a joyful intergenerational cloister moment in church.

Last Summer's Connect Holiday club, the first run in the new community centre, was well attended and introduced some new families to STACC. The Light Party and The Nativity Trail were both well attended and this year's Easter Adventure in Victoria Park in collaboration with other churches in the city is very exciting.

I have almost completed the second year of my MA in Theology, Mission and Ministry for Children's Specialists and it continues to be an excellent source of supportive networking relationships and inspiration for the day job.

Youth Minister – Stuart McLachlan writes:

We now have a regular Youth Hangout after The 6 service every week. This has been very successful and has drawn in new young people into the church and brought others back. We also have an older youth home group sessions twice a month and the launch of the younger youth home group also twice a month. Attendance at Foxhill Youth Group has been steady with new young people attending from the estate. The move from St Andrews caused a drop in numbers overall, but some amazing relationships are being formed. The number of young people attending Holy Trinity youth provision in the mornings dropped with the arrival of the evening service, but there have been some great conversations and growth in the young people's faith. We also launched a once-a-month Youth worship evening and P.A / sound desk training. Over the year we seen 2 people give their lives to Jesus through our school's work in Ralph Allen and have been running a successful C.U reaching 15 unchurched young people every week.

Pastoral Minister – Sharon Blair writes:

Pastoral. Our Family Support Crew has now joined with the Seniors Pastoral Team to create a mega Pastoral Team who will collate the pastoral needs of our parish and attempt, with the Lord's help, to

meet them. It is amazing that the lovely Vanessa Rew has stepped up to be a pastoral assistant and she is also coordinating some of the seniors' events. And there will be a slight change to my title which will now just be Pastoral Minister.

Newcomers: Every September it's lovely to see people joining our church and growing our congregations. Not so many people in their 20's joined this year, but they have appeared during the year which is great.

St Andrew's Toddlers: We are still the 'best toddler group in the area' according to the mums. Hurray! We now have a very strong team on the ground chatting to the mums and playing with the toddlers. We are SO grateful to the team of servant hearted cooks and sous chefs who prepare the meal!

Cake Ministry: This has grown over the past year and there are now 9 wonderful 'British Bake Off' bakers baking cakes once a month to bless households from church and those not yet in the church.

Parenting Courses – having run children's and teenagers' parenting courses last year, this year we ran a Parenting for Faith course for parents of under 5's. This was great fun.

Church Family Events (i.e. after church lunches, 'Host a Roast', Combe Down Fest, New Wine etc.) These events are so important for us to get to know the whole church family of all generations AND to invite others to hear the good news of Jesus. The Coronation Tea was a real highlight, with the church and village meeting, and many good contacts and relationships were formed over sandwiches and cake!

Seniors' work has been overseen by Tim Lewis and Vanessa Rew, together with the Seniors' Pastoral Team, (now part of the expanded Pastoral Team) which keeps in touch with our senior members. The **Thursday Service** at Holy Trinity continues to flourish, with increasing numbers and a regular communion service on the first Thursday of the month. Monthly lunches after the service give an opportunity for greater fellowship.

A Dementia friendly carol service was held in December in conjunction with the Peggy Dodd Centre, and a Retreat Day at the end of April, with 37 people attending.

Small Group Coordinator – Sharon Blair writes:

Small Groups continue to be a vital part of the health of our churches. We currently have 22 groups with a majority of church members in a group. This year Mark and Rebecca Hannan stepped down from having led the Small Group ministry for several years. With their input we have brought some change to this area. Shawn Swinney is taking a lead on Small Group Leader training, which is now termly. Sharon Blair has taken on helping people join groups. Jane Bradby had taken on some of the administration required. In the future we will bring changes that raise awareness of the various groups and make it easier for people to join.

It is impressive to see the quality of leadership we have among our Small Group Leaders. This is important as the small groups are often our church's front line in helping people through pastoral crisis, and discipling people in their faith.

Women's Ministry – Penny Williams writes:

It is with mixed feelings that I write this report. I am very grateful of the support of my team, and we have worked so well together to support the Women in HT and StACC. However, on a personal level I believe it is time to move on and hand on the baton to someone with a new vision and passion. We are still waiting to discover who that might be, so we all need to pray for this next step in the ministry.

Ammerdown Weekend: We had a great weekend away led by Hils Grew from Trinity Cheltenham. There was a mix of women staying at Ammerdown with others joining us for one or both days. It was a very good opportunity for women to really connect and get to know each other. This was especially valuable for newer church members.

Clothes Sale: Yet another successful sale this year which was very well attended by church members and individuals from the community. There was a great atmosphere, and it raised a significant sum of money for our Mission Partners both by sales and by sending unsold clothes out to Atilla to stock his very successful second-hand shop.

Guided walk: The Hidden Secrets of Bath led by Jim McPhee. Another super guided walk which was very much appreciated by those who came. A great evening.

Worship Evening: Anna and Rachel headed up the first of our Women's evenings. This was a great time to meet with the Lord and to encourage each other. We had very inspiring teaching from Amy Summerfield followed by an extended time of prayer ministry. About 70 women across the age ranges attended and so appreciated a time to focus on the Lord.

Christmas Craft: This year we returned to a 'making evening' and it was very well supported with women of all ages. There was a super atmosphere and people brought friends and colleagues along. Lizzie Guilbaud gave a short talk to inspire us.

Men's Ministry – Jon Williams writes:

The men's programme, which is organised by John Moore and me, continues with a similar format and includes such activities as a curry night, breakfasts, pub nights, a BBQ, wine tasting and also a week-end away. It was also good to have a number of us travel to Romania to support Atilla and his work by building a year-round eco greenhouse.

Our range of activities are always on the church website and backed up by regular reminders via email. Typical numbers for an event are circa 40 which is encouraging and indicates a desire for guys to meet up and connect with each other. We still wonder how we can involve, excite and motivate the under 40's, who undoubtedly have busy timetables, and John Moore and I are always open to ideas.

Mother's Union – Elizabeth Perrott, writes:

Hope was very much our theme in 2023. We continued to support families under pressure, abuse and injustice at home as well as our projects overseas. Through our prayers and worship and efforts to raise funds we hope to be able transform lives in many families.

We had a full programme of inspiring speakers to share with us so many aspects of trafficking many families face. We shared new area of concern as we took on support for Child Carers. We continue to support Threeways School with vouchers to ease Period Poverty. We are also continuing to raise awareness of abuse against women and girls in UK. We have also maintained our work with Genesis Foodbank and Women's Refuge which we began in the covid lockdowns. We also keep up promotion of Student Cookery Book online as well as hard copies.

We look forward, as ever, to maintain and uphold families in our community here at HT. Prayer is heartbeat of all our activities.

PRAYER

We place a high value on Prayer in both the churches in our parish, for personal, local, and international needs.

The prayer groups are:

- Morning Prayer on zoom on Monday and Friday morning at 8:50 which covers personal needs, Church matters and events, and local and international topics, along with a lot of laughter, before we start praying!
- Thursday 7am Prayer Group lifts the needs of our mission partners both in the UK and abroad.
- Prayer at St Andrews for the needs of the church, held monthly.
- Mission Prayers are held on Zoom on the last Monday of each month.
- Prayer for the Persecuted Church which is a zoom meeting held monthly.
- Prayer for Revival – a monthly prayer meeting held on zoom with about 10 attendees.
- There is also an Emergency Prayer chain for urgent prayer needs.

There are other prayer meetings supporting particular ministries and initiatives, and the situation changes as different needs arise.

Operations May 2023 – April 2024

At the start of the period the operations team was running with two vacancies (the finance and media roles). Then, on the 18 May 2023 Jacqui Bates joined the team to cover finance. We had to wait until 16th October to appoint a new Media Officer during which time the role was only partially covered and other long-term work was deferred. However, by 20th March 2024 we had appointed our first full-time Media and Communications Officer, Megan James. We now have the equivalent of (nearly) four full time staff looking after the operations of Holy Trinity and plus mornings with Peter at St Andrews and the Community Centre.

The team continue to cover in no particular order: purchasing, accounting, website management, graphic design, printing, communications, contracting, repairs, health and safety, risk assessment, wedding and funeral administration, rostering, lettings, sales, and recruitment (but hopefully none for a while).

REPORTS FROM THE PCC SUBCOMMITTEES

Chair of the Staffing Committee – Keith Reynolds writes:

During the last 12 months we have seen the following staff movements: –

Our Intern Anthony Walton completed his time with us in June 2023 and is now a church administrator in Huddersfield.

Katie Machell joined in October to provide temporary cover for our Media and Communication role whilst we continued to recruit. She swiftly became a valued member of the team, and we were sad to see her go, but excited for her new job. We are now delighted to welcome our permanent staff member Megan James who started in this new post in March.

In January this year our new intern Zoe Wang joined Stu and Claire to work with our children and young people, swiftly followed by the transfer to us of our new curate Ben Notley. We extend a warm welcome to Zoe & Ben.

Katy Partridge announced the end of her curacy as she moves to take up position at St Mary's Southampton. Katy will be sorely missed, and we pray for God's peace and blessings over her next ministry and forthcoming marriage.

As we write we are in the process of interviewing for the role of Worship leader.

The Staffing Committee would like to thank each of our staff and our many volunteers for all the work undertaken in support of our churches across the benefice.

- Chris Stone, Caretaker
- Claire Morrish, Children's Minister
- Stuart McLachlan, Youth Minister
- Dan & Lydia Collison, Worship Leaders
- Chris Absolon, Curate
- Katy Partridge, Curate
- Malcolm Morgan, Senior Associate Minister – St Andrew's
- Tim Lewis, Senior Associate Minister for Growth
- and, steering the ship, our Vicar, Shawn Swinney

A heart-felt thanks to each of you for your commitment and dedication to our church family. I'd like to conclude with a big shout out for our incredible team of volunteers! We are blessed to be members of thriving churches, and in no small measure is this due to the many servant-hearted volunteers who work, often behind the scenes, to support the various ministries and effective operation of the church. The Staffing Committee extends a huge thank you to each of you for all you do.

Chair of the Buildings Committee – Howard Jones writes:

The Building Committee have met on 3 occasions during the last 12 months to discuss the condition and maintenance of Holy Trinity church building and the properties owned by Holy Trinity Trust: StACC, the Community Centre, Church Rooms and Trinity Cottage.

During this period, I am grateful as ever for the work carried out by Liz Hume, Chris Stone and David Le Tall especially during my absence whilst receiving medical treatment.

In July 2023, our Church Architect, George Chedburn surveyed and completed the Quinquennial Inspection (QI) of Holy Trinity as required by the Diocese and we are currently working through the recommendations. The APCM will be pleased to hear his final comment in the report 'Holy Trinity is well maintained and the PCC and Churchwardens should be congratulated on the work that has been achieved over the years. The recommendations in this report are fairly minor and can be carried out as part of the normal maintenance cycle for the church'.

In July 2023 we also commissioned our arboriculturist to survey all the trees in the church grounds and report on their condition. He has recommended crown reduction in a number of large beech trees and the removal of an ash tree through dieback and a holly tree located too close to the building.

Looking forward the more major maintenance items to focus on will be:

1. Completion of all items within the QI and especially the water ingress in the north aisle.
2. Creating a footpath linking StACC and Community Center with new external signage.
3. Replacing the chain link fencing around the Community Centre car park.
4. Replacing the fluorescent light fittings with LED components.
5. Replacing the flat roof of the church rooms building, which is in a poor condition. This cost will be met by HTT.

On a more strategic level, we have asked the church architect to produce further sketch schemes which we may share with BaNES planners to ascertain the possibility and extent of an extension to allow us to meet the growing needs of our church family.

Howard Jones
Chair of Building Cttee

Safeguarding – Viv Quick, Safeguarding Officer for HT writes:

In line with House of Bishops we are taking the issue of Safeguarding very seriously here at HT and StACC.

So how are we doing? Everyone who is in any position of helping, children, young people, seniors and the vulnerable have a current DBS in place. I must thank Jane Bradby for the sterling work she does in keeping us up to date with the Diocesan requirements of 3 yearly updates for people who are in a position where a DBS is required. Please – when you are asked to renew do it ASAP. All PCC members are also now asked to do Domestic Violence training.

We continue to have discussions about how to keep some of our most vulnerable seniors safe, Tim Lewis and Vanessa Rew are now helping with the seniors' team who are as ever alert and pro-active.

We wish again to thank the pastoral team for all the work that has been done to help keep our vulnerable members safe.

I think that we must never forget the impact that the hidden Sexual abuse has had on the survivors and realise anew that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The diocese would like as many of the congregation do the basic level safeguarding training, so please everyone think about it and we will be giving out further information in the next few weeks

I have stood in to cover the vacancy at StACC but now Mark Bagott is taking over and we will continue to liaise about the relevant issues.

Any concerns in either church have been followed up and dealt with appropriately and we have had issues which we have needed to discuss to keep people safe. If any issues or concerns do arise, they are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

My contact details are on the poster so please contact me if any concerns at all. Thank you.

MISSION

Missions Team Leaders – William Challis (International) and Sue Budd (UK) write:

HTCD allocates 10% of its annual budget for 'mission' work outside the parish. This is managed by the International Mission Team (IMT) and the UK Mission Team (UKMT), who divide this figure 2:1.

William writes: We continue to thank God for the generosity of our Church, which enables us to support Mission Partners in Romania, Albania, Kenya, Zambia and Tanzania. We always value direct meetings with our Mission Partners, and this past year we are especially glad that some of our young people were able to visit the Alkazjaris in Albania, and that there are regular trips to Romania – do sign up for a cycling or walking holiday in Transylvania! Our Mission Weekend in November went encouragingly, and we are planning to move the weekend to the summer of 2025 to make the best use of warmer weather. Once a month we meet to pray with our Mission Partners – it's the last Monday of the month at 7pm, so do join us!

Sue writes: We thank God for His work of transforming lives and equipping our mission partners. We are committed to supporting our 6 missions in Bath and 2 more in Bradford and Bristol, both financially through regular donations and in prayer. We have a new short-term link with Tom Piper from UCCF in our Universities and Norland College. The Mission Weekend brought Indi and a team from Bradford, who witnessed powerfully to God's care for the displaced. They supported The Mission Café with five other organisations and introduced Meheret at our services. Genesis spoke at St Andrew's, and both shared at the popular Mission lunch. My thanks go to all who supported these events. We continue the monthly zoom prayer meeting with the IMT and provide news and prayer needs in the Prayer Diary and notice sheets. We are looking forward to closer ties with IMT and thank Sue Crookes and Jane Butterworth for their support.

ST ANDREW'S COMMUNITY CHURCH and ST ANDREWS COMMUNITY CENTRE

Peter Watt – Centre Manager writes:

It is such fun working with Malc and the incredible team of volunteers that come through the doors. The number of groups using both the Church and the Community Centre continues to grow each month, which is very exciting. So many people enter through the doors each week and we pray that they are touched by Jesus in a special way. What a privilege!

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH DECORATION

Flower Arranging team – Julie McPhee writes:

At Holy Trinity we are blessed to have a team of ladies who happily give their time and talents to provide lovely arrangements throughout the year, bringing the beauty of flowers into our church building.

Our combined team decorated the church at Christmas, Easter and Harvest, combined with the Wild about Bath photographic exhibition. We were also able to provide decorations to help celebrate the Coronation of King Charles in May.

We are delighted that two new members have joined the team. If anyone else is interested in joining you would be very welcome, please do get in touch.

Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Romans 12:10-12