



CHRIST CHURCH DOWNEND

Annual Report 2025



Contents

Introduction	3
About Christ Church Downend	4
Church structure	5
Parochial Church Council (PCC)	6
Churchwardens	6
Safeguarding	7
Worship	8
Mission and outreach	9
Discipleship	11
Pastoral care	11
Children	12
School Chaplaincy and Church Schools	13
Youth	14
Finance	15

A copy of the full church accounts will be made available in advance of the APCM.

Christ Church is the Anglican (Church of England) Parish Church of Downend, serving a population of around 25,000 people including those living in the communities of Staple Hill, Oldbury Court, Downend, Blackhorse, Bromley Heath and part of Emersons Green. It is part of the Diocese of Bristol.

Our vision is to become a vibrant community that is 'Learning to Live the Jesus Life'.

Introduction

As I sit down to write this report, I recognise an opportunity to stop, look back and reflect on the past year and give thanks to God for all that the Lord has done in and through our community here at Christ Church. The words of Hebrews 12:1-2 ring in my ears 'Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.' The writer of Hebrews echoes the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:24, encouraging us to run the race set before us with endurance and fix our eyes on the goal, the finish line, in order that we may complete the race. We are called to lay aside everything that would ensnare and entangle us – all sin and distractions and press on to the finish line, 'looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith'.

I am someone that often focuses on how far we have yet to go, rather than in noticing how far we have come.

The annual report forces me to stop, look back and give thanks. So, I stopped to look back through my calendar to reflect on the last year with you all. I have to say my brain is spinning a bit. There have been great highs and some lows, there has been joy and there has been pain.

'I have to say my brain is spinning a bit ...'

We have preached through the renewed vision strapline: 'Learning to live the Jesus life' with our mission aspirations to grow Deeper, Wider and Younger by encouraging all of us to Tell, Invite, Pray, Give, Serve.

We appointed Julie Gardner to be the School Chaplaincy Team leader to develop that ministry, so that we are now working with seven of the eight primary schools in our parish.

We started the monthly Bubble Church in October of this year at Quakers Road with a new team of adults and children serving alongside each other.

We started serving cooked lunches at Warm Space twice a month and introduced a thought for the day.

We have had an energy audit of all the Church's buildings and James Gardner and the Eco Committee have been working on a plan to move towards net zero. As a result, the Parish Hall heating system will be replaced later this year.

We have also had a new roof on the Chancel which was completed in February of this year.

Lastly, we had a very successful Gift Day to establish 'The growing younger fund'. I am overjoyed to say that this has raised nearly £50,000, with Gift Aid. This will enable us, along with grant funding that we have applied for, to cover the salaries of our Children's Worker, School Chaplaincy Team Leader and enable us to explore recruiting someone to help us develop our youth work and connection with Downend Secondary School.

I am so thankful for the many people involved in leadership and ministry here at Christ Church. There are as many 'back stage' roles as well as those public facing ministries and it is good and right to acknowledge these and thank everyone for sharing in this ministry. Underpinning our acts of service is the hope that lives can and are changed through the power of the Holy Spirit. We dare to believe that Jesus takes our acts of service, blesses them and shares them in building up the Kingdom of God in this place. So let me end where I began, with the words of Hebrews 12 by encouraging us to keep on running the race, to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. May we, like Paul, finish strong.

Dan Watts
Vicar



About Christ Church Downend

Christ Church Downend, Parish Office, 57 North Street, Downend, Bristol. BS16 5SG
0117 908 9867 | parishadmin@christchurchdownend.com | www.christchurchdownend.com

Clergy:

Rev Dan Watts (Vicar)
Rev Paul Peterson (Associate Minister and Chair of PCC)
Rev Chris Dobson (Assistant Minister)
Rev Anne-Louise Critchlow
Rev Philip Rowe

Lay Minister:

Alison Rowe

Church Wardens: Bryan Ashton and Maggie Nichols

PCC Elected Members from May 2024

Richard Bacon
Julian Cox
Sally Green
Andy Pound (chair of staffing committee)
Katie Allen
Debbie Pastwa
Nigel Stowe (vice chair of PCC)
Lynda Lloyd

PCC Minutes Secretary:

Hilary Stadden (from September 2024)

Deanery Synod: Alison Rowe

Honorary Treasurer: vacant

Committee structure: Committee Structure: The PCC has delegated responsibilities as follows: a Standing Committee sets agendas and deals with PCC business between formal meetings. The Giving 4 Life team oversee the church's finances and the Wardens take responsibility for general building issues. A personnel sub group seeks to ensure good practice in the recruitment and oversight of staff and other leaders in mission. A Halls Committee oversees the fabric and function of the Parish Halls.

In addition, the Ministry Leadership team works with the Incumbent in setting and reviewing mission priorities and their effectiveness.

Other elected posts and office holders

Health and Safety Officers:

Church Wardens

Electoral Roll Officer: Elissa Wiltshire

Deputy Warden (Church Centre

Quakers Road): Sally Green

Parish Safeguarding Officer:

Laura Green

Safeguarding Administrator:

Elissa Wiltshire

CAP Centre Manager: Rosie Brydon

CAP Debt Coaches: Sally Grier, Karen Scorer and Mark Tanner

Parish Administrator: Beth Mullins

IT and Finance: Elissa Wiltshire

Bookkeeper: Gabrielle Foster

Christ Church Building Manager:

Maggie Nichols

Verger: Andy McNeill

Ministry Heads (as at 1 April 2025):

Children: Harriet Jolly

Community Chaplain:

Anne-Louise Critchlow

Discipleship: Anita Dobson

Mission and outreach: Paul Peterson

Operation and comms: Beth Mullins and Elissa Wiltshire

Pastoral: Philip Rowe and Care Co-ordinators Team

Schools ministry: Julie Gardner

Worship and leadership

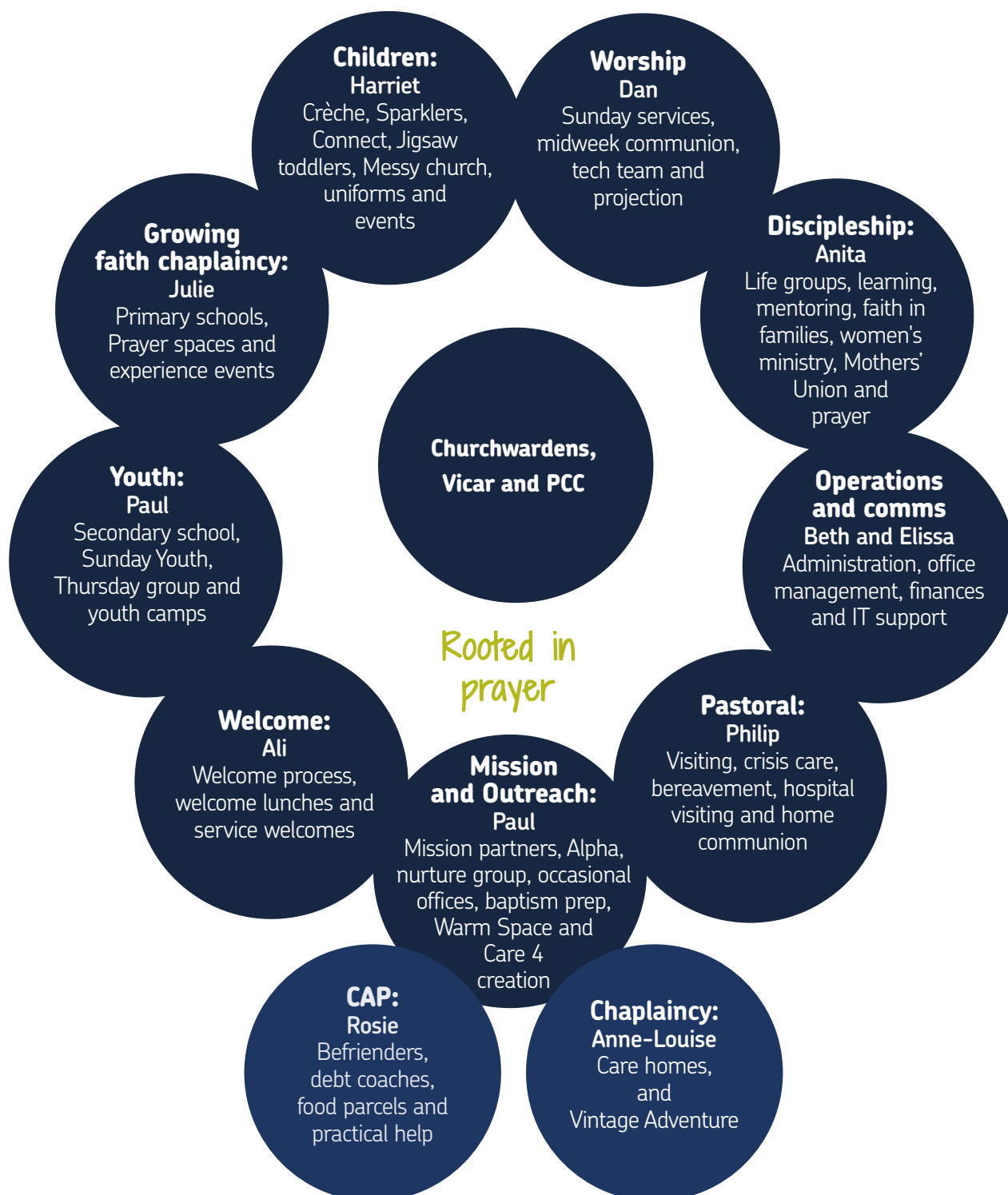
development: Dan Watts

Youth: Paul Peterson



Church structure

(as at 1 May 2025)



Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) held six meetings face to face during 2024/2025. Each meeting began with some time in prayer, reflection and discussion. Following this a number of proposals were approved including various items relating to vision (Deeper, Wider, Younger), buildings, finance, mission support, safeguarding and staffing matters.

Hilary Stadden took over as PCC Secretary in October 2024.

The newly formed Standing Committee (Dan, Paul, Maggie, Bryan and Nigel) met in advance of each PCC to agree agendas, and dealt with committee business between meetings.

Finances

The Budget and the 2025 parochial Fees were set and approved.

Our Parish Share contribution was set at £100K. If funds allow this will increase to £110K.

A staff salary increase of 3.9% in line with January CPIH was approved

We have received grants for Warm Space which continues to be very successful, and towards the cost of employing a youth worker/youth intern.

New Hymn books for Church Centre Quakers Road were purchased.

Buildings

The Churchwardens submitted regular detailed reports and expenditure was agreed on various items to ensure that our buildings are well looked after. Work on the Chancel roof was started and is now complete.

A Joint Parish Halls Committee met regularly and reported back to the PCC. James Gardner has led on our net zero aspirations and has secured significant funding towards the installation of heat pumps for the Parish Hall.

Safeguarding

Laura Green our Parish Safeguarding Officer has reported back at each meeting with various Safeguarding

reports and policies have been reviewed.

Human resources

In April Philip Rowe was licenced to the team by Archdeacon Christopher.

A number of key policies have been approved and implemented.

Julie Gardner was appointed to the School Chaplaincy Role.

Changes in roles within our Parish Administration team were discussed and approved.

The PCC played a key role in responding to changes in our youth ministry team during the course of the year.

Hilary Stadden (PCC Secretary)



Churchwardens

Scaffolding and the Church building seem to go hand in hand! We seem to have had it adorning our building regularly over the past few years. Last year we were able to report that work was completed on the Bell Tower, we then found that the Chancel roof was leaking! Up went the steel pipes and boards again, the tiling was removed, insulated, felted and retiled. Maggie and I are glad to report that the church is now watertight and well insulated. One of the duties of the Churchwardens is to make sure that all of our buildings are in good repair, challenging indeed.

To that end we had a 3 yearly inspection by the Archdeacon, known as the 'Triennial', which took place in April this year. Apart from the building

they checked the church grounds and boundaries, logbooks, electrical, PAT and gas safety certificates. We also have to show PCC and APCM minutes as well as the church property register including the 'Terrier' and inventory plus much more, pause for breath!

Security, health and safety are always high on our priority list, so we now have a new security system in the Church and the Parish Hall. Broadband has also been updated recently in both buildings, and the Parish Hall will have a new fire alarm system. The Church Centre at Quakers Road is well maintained and run by a small group of dedicated volunteers, led by our deputy Wardens Sally and Linda, thank you for your hard work.



We are also blessed by our Deputy Wardens team who are dedicated to helping at Christ Church. Without them we would not be able to fulfil all of our duties, so we thank them all sincerely for their hard work.

1 Peter 4:10: Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift they have received from God.

Bryan Ashton and Maggie Nichols



Safeguarding

As Parish Safeguarding Officer for the last two years I've been working with the leadership team and the PCC to help all people within Christ Church to realise the importance of safeguarding and how it is everyone's responsibility to create a good safeguarding culture.. We have been working through the Parish Dashboard to work out what needs to be our priorities when it comes to safeguarding, and meeting the safeguarding standards set by the Church of England.

I have met with heads of ministries, as individuals and as teams to update them and support them in the safer recruitment process, ensuring that not only do our staff and volunteers meet the safeguarding requirements, but we support those in roles and ensure they are using their God given gifts well.

There are over 80 people within Christ Church who have a DBS check,

which means they are working with children, young people or vulnerable adults regularly. That is amazing, thank you all so much. I have been encouraging them to complete the training required so everyone is aware

'... realise the importance of safeguarding and how it is everyone's responsibility...'

of their responsibilities and what to do if they have any concerns, to protect themselves as well as those we come into contact with. There was a face to face teaching session which was good to have a chance to discuss any issues that have come up.

As part of the Parish dashboard we had to collate a list of church activities

that are for children, young people or vulnerable adults. There are over 40 different activities that happen at least once a year, for both those within the church already and reaching out to our local communities. We need to do everything possible to ensure that people attending these events know that Christ Church is a safe place with an open and honest culture.

If you have any concerns or questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at safeguarding@christchurchdownend.com

Laura Green
Parish Safeguarding Officer



Worship

Church worship services are a key way in which we are formed both as a community and into the likeness of Christ. As we weekly reorientate our hearts and minds around the person of Jesus, so we become more like him and our relationships with one another are deepened. The weekly pattern of worship continues with a regular common worship service at the Church Centre, Quakers Road at 9:15am and at Christ Church at 10:30am where there are also age specific groups for children and young people and a weekly communion on Thursday mornings at 9:30am at Christ Church. There is also the monthly evening Celtic service at 6:30am and the newly started Bubble Church that takes place at Quakers Road at 4pm on a Sunday afternoon. Open Church continues to faithfully meet on a Tuesday morning with 20 regularly attending.

Bubble Church

Bubble Church has been a fantastic new project that has connected the Quakers Road worshipping community, our young families and our youth. Bubble Church was born during lockdown – hence the bubbles – at Ascension Church in Balham. They have generously shared their learning through the model which we replicate in our setting. Families come together and sit on their bubble mat and enjoy a 30-minute puppet-led,

structured worship service with songs, prayer and Bible stories. Each family has a bubble bag on their bubble mat which contains something

‘Music has such a powerful role to play in worship...’

that helps us to connect with the Bible story and experience something new about God and about ourselves. We finish the afternoon off with a delicious children’s tea and plenty of time to chat and connect together.

It has been such a joy to see the Bubble Church community growing and developing – we have several families for whom this is their only experience of church. It has also been a place where families can invite other families along to experience church in a different way. We regularly have between four and seven families coming along each month with about 12 families who have come along at least once.

As part of the core leadership of Bubble Church, we have youth and children. We all take on different roles each week – sometimes running the sound and vision, sometimes welcoming, sometimes being a puppeteer, sometimes leading the prayers or a game. We have a dedicated team in the kitchen who serve the families and the team with tea and sandwiches! Bubble Church is a safe and welcoming place where even 2 and 3 year old children can sing and dance and move and join in. It is a place where children, young people and adults can learn to lead and a way of demonstrating God’s love, joy and grace in that part of our parish. Please continue to pray that this message of good news continues to bring life and blessing to all. We would love to see more families coming along and making Bubble Church their church family.

Dan Watts

Vicar



Mission and outreach

One of our three stated aspirations as a church is to 'reach wider' and that has been expressed in a variety of ways in the last 12 months.

Warm Space Café (Maggie Nichols)

South Gloucestershire Council has continued to support us financially with this weekly venture, for which we are very grateful. Downend Coop still provide us with bread each week and recently B & A Church on Gloucester Road are providing meals, fortnightly, which have been received really well. It is such a joy to serve our Lord in this way each week. Even if you are feeling down, the smiles on the faces of those who come particularly to Music Train weeks is amazing and gives us all a real lift. I am really grateful to all the volunteers who turn up each week, either with cake or to serve. One of the Directors from Milestone Trust who attended Music Train recently, when he left said 'please don't stop providing this facility, it's amazing'.

CAP Debt Centre and Foodbank (Rosie Brydon)

It would probably be true to say that the CAP team have faced challenges since the report last year – some clients have had extremely complex situations to unravel, whilst some have found it hard to complete the process due to poor physical and mental health. However, there is no doubt that we have seen God at work, and we've experienced His presence in so many circumstances as we have met with clients. Whatever the outcome of their journey with CAP, it is such a privilege to have the opportunity to pray into their lives and assure them that God sees and cares for them.

In addition to continuing our links with DHI, the charity supporting those trying to overcome addiction, we have also established a

relationship with the team running Vassalls Family Centre. We're very excited to be trialling our 1st Money Coaching Course in April for some of their parents with a team of our CAP volunteers supporting delegates as they attend the sessions. We pray this will be a link that bears fruit.

'I am excited to see where God will lead and what he will do ...'

Over the past year we have had 15 clients go debt free! We're working closely with Julie in her School Chaplaincy role to strengthen links with our schools. Our hamper and present delivery was extended to families from 5 local primary schools last Christmas.

We are really encouraged to have Karen Scorer from Grace Church, join us as a Debt Coach. She completed the first stage of training in December and is now taking on client appointments. Please pray for her as she gains

experience in this role.

As always thank you to everyone for volunteering, praying for clients and the team, and contributing so faithfully to the Foodbank and Christmas hampers.



Mission Partners (Paul Peterson)

We've continued to partner with the following mission agencies:

- Christians Against Poverty – Bristol North East Centre
- CMS – Ben and Katy Ray in Tanzania
- Transform Europe Network – Misa Hiorescu in Moldova
- Haven Home Orphanage – India
- Mission Direct – Kumi, Uganda
- Open Doors – worldwide
- Kingswood and South Gloucestershire Deanery Uganda link



These partnerships have been expressed through financial support, prayer, encouragement and visits. In November several members of Christ Church visited three of the link dioceses in Uganda, and this summer a number of families will participate in a similar trip to two further dioceses. Jan and Richard Bacon continue to oversee the Mission Direct projects in Kumi, and Luke Paddon will be spending 6 months at Haven Home orphanage from September 2025.

Anna Chaplaincy (Anne-Louise Critchlow)

In the last year, I have made monthly visits to nine care and supported housing homes for either a communion or Songs of Praise service. As well as community carol singing, this Easter we have presented 'Easter in a Box', which gives practical

opportunities to understand the Easter story. I have had several people who have told me how much this means to them and this year I have concentrated on providing a special type of service for those who have dementia. When those individuals engage with me directly, I know that it has been successful. I have opportunities for praying with people individually, pastoral care (such as visits to hospitals) and end of life care. Since last May at Vintage Adventure, we have been involved with cross-generational outreach. On two occasions we have joined with Bromley Heath Infants School (and our Schools' Chaplain, Julie Gardner has been involved too) to look at Childhood Memories and Harvest. On two occasions we have joined with Wiggleypeeps pre-school to celebrate Christingle and Mother's Day. We held our second Holiday at Home last July, with solo singers, a photography session, bingo and lunch.

Community events

From Messy events at major festivals to The Noise Weekend, Carols at the Co-op, Bounce into the New Year and Pancake Parties there have been plenty of ways of bringing the community together and developing meaningful relationships. Our aim is always to strengthen links with those on the fringe of faith and church life, whilst getting to know a wider cross section of the community. As relationships are built, great conversations can be had and the love of Christ can be demonstrated in practical and fun ways. It's through participation in events like these that we often find people returning to church or starting to explore faith in a new way.

These events require a lot of planning and volunteer time, but are great fun and very rewarding. Do look out for the next opportunities to get involved – whether you're a dab hand at face painting, a talented BBQer or happy just serving behind the scenes, we'd love you to get involved.

Paul Peterson

Associate minster



Discipleship

'But what about you? Who do you say I am?' (Mark 8:29)

Who do you say Jesus is? It probably takes a lifetime to answer that question fully.

To answer it, we need each other, for encouragement and challenge.



Our Life Groups remain the best way for most people to go on that journey, as we study, pray and share life together. We offered the Romans Course for those wanting to dive deeper into Bible study. Other groups such as the Reading Group,

Bereavement Group, Mothers Union and Open Church continue to offer people times and spaces to connect and grow.

Our church library of excellent books has been reorganised so do dip in.

We continued to explore different spiritual practices in 2024 such as hospitality, and in 2025 some are taking advantage of the Diocese of Bristol's Rhythm of Life resources. Spiritual practices are the bedrock of our Christian life, because we invest time in what matters to us.

We continue to reach out to families to encourage them to explore

faith or to get to know us better so we can share our

faith. Parents from local schools have connected with our parenting course and said it was 'really helpful to meet with other mums and talk.' We built relationships and offered prayer even in the midst of busy family fun events with the bouncy castle. Tea and Toast after school drop in began to take off and we now have 10-12 families regularly.

Most of our discipleship happens out on our frontlines, the places where we spend time and others get to watch how we act, how we speak and how we share Jesus.

What new steps along the journey will you take this year?

If you are hungry to grow more, or if you would like to find out about any activities or resources, please get in touch.

Anita Dobson



Pastoral care

The role of the team is 'to coordinate the responses to pastoral needs within the Church making use of existing structures such as the Staff Team, Warm Space, Mother's Union, Open Church, Bereavement Group, Home Groups etc'. The team meets four times a year to evaluate how effective we are in achieving this. This includes our care as a Church family and how we can develop it further. We would be grateful for any comments or suggestions you have. Please give these to me.

I am grateful to team members who give ongoing care, including

Home Holy Communion. I am also thankful to all those who show care through one of the Church groups. I am also aware that a large source of care is given by those who personally provide loving support. This is often unseen by others but none the less appreciated. By all these means we bring assistance and comfort to others in their time of need. By doing this we are also witnessing to God's love for everyone. As Jesus says: 'All people will know that you are my disciples if you love one another' (John 13:35).

We are also grateful to the team of welcomers led by Alison

Rowe. Each Sunday they ensure that newcomers are made welcome and encouraged to be part of the Church family.

Please let me or the Church Office know of anyone who needs pastoral care. We rely on people making their own needs or those of others known.

Philip Rowe



Children

Mark 9:36-37 reads 'Taking a child in his arms, Jesus said to them, 'Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me.'

I cannot think of a greater responsibility or privilege than to welcome little children into the love of God. I feel a strong sense of God calling me to share his love with our children. How amazing would it be if all children grow up knowing that they are chosen and loved by God!

I am so grateful for the prayers and support from the children's ministry team and my Christ Church family. I would like to share some of my personal highlights during the last year.

The Christingle service was a really special time – to see so many children holding their candles and shining the light for Jesus was so encouraging. I felt a real sense of God with us, as the children heard how much Jesus loves them.

There was one particular week at Bible Club (Christ Church Infants), where one of the children was thinking about her friend who was playing alone, so we invited her along to join us. I was later told how much being at Bible Club had meant to this child. This was an inspiring reminder of the seeds we are planting. When we respond to God's prompting, he can do great things with it.

No matter what kind of week I have had, I always come away from Jigsaw feeling uplifted!

To be sharing the Bible and singing about God's love with our very youngest babies and children is something really special. When you see the excitement on the children's faces as Monty comes out his box with the Bible, or see the children starting to learn the actions and words for the prayer song, you know God is at work!

Whilst teaching the children in our Sunday groups, I find I am learning so much from them about my own faith and feel blessed that this deepens my own relationship with our wonderful Father God.

Harriet Jolly



School Chaplaincy and Church Schools



The schools' chaplaincy team at Christ Church Downend aim to work with schools, their children and families in Downend, bringing the love of God to all we meet, so that all can flourish.

It has been a year of building on the existing excellent provision for children and young people to our Church of England Primary Schools after Covid and extending it to five other primary schools with no religious designation in Downend.

Our initial offering has included:

Three Experience Events at Harvest, Christmas and Easter times where children visit the church from each school and experience the Christian stories and beliefs around these festivals in a safe and interactive manner. The children can ask questions about Christianity and the people they meet here. One teacher sent this message afterwards, '... just wanted to let you know how amazing the Easter Experience was. The children went home excited. There were a lot of positives from the parents about the trip. Thank you for offering it to us. Amazing team. Thank you.'

Our second main initiative, built over the last two years, has been visiting schools with prayer and reflective space workshops. A small church volunteer team take in practical activities based on Christianity, but accessible to all children of any faith or none, that help support children's spiritual growth in the broadest sense. This has resulted in two schools setting up permanent spiritual spaces in their buildings and another two are at the initial stages of doing so. Since May 2024, we have reached approximately 1,600 children with these initiatives.

Other green shoots in our schools' chaplaincy.

- Dan Watts and Paul Peterson continue to offer assemblies and

school services to Christ Church Infant (CCI) and Junior (CCJ) schools and to other schools on request. The worship monitors visit the church regularly

- The cross-church puppet team, led by Sheila Robbins visits schools at Christmas, Easter and other times, when requested
- Anita Dobson and Ali Rowe are running parenting courses for parents of children in our local schools
- Harriet Jolly continues to run Bible Club at CCI.
- Anne-Louise Critchlow made links between Bromley Heath Infants and Vintage Adventure. Julie Gardner has joined her this year
- CAP offered a Christmas hamper to three families in receipt of pupil premium at each school this year. These were well received.

Building Relationships

- Frome Vale Academy has recently joined us. They visited Experience Easter for the first time in 2025. The principal has been welcoming and the staff who have visited us, enthusiastic. In her chaplain role, Julie has been helping children read in Year 5. There is the possibility of supporting RE provision in the coming year
- The Nest special school asked for Christmas in a Box to go into their school in the six weeks before Christmas. This was precious work with children who struggle with all sorts of issues. The staff have commented on how welcoming the church is for those with extra needs
- CCI and CCJ schools recently had a visit from the Saltmine Theatre Company who acted out the Rhyming Bible. This was amazing, according to the headteachers!
- CCJ also benefitted from a visit by the I am Mark team
- A newsletter is going out termly

to all the schools with information from Christ Church Downend

- that is of interest to families
- In the coming months there are four reflective/prayer space workshops booked and a new faith club at Blackhorse Primary School.

Over the last few months Christ Church Infant School had a very positive SIAMS inspection and Christ Church Junior School received the Church School Partnership Award at Gold level from Bishop Neil. Testimony to the strong links built up over many years.

I would like to highlight our amazing volunteer team. Each person brings their experience, faith and love to the children. It is wonderful seeing the team grow. We opened the year with a prayer and planning evening and recently had a couple of training days on Children's Spirituality: What it is and how to spot it and Prayer and Reflective Space Training from Bristol Schools' Connection. We welcome two new people to the team this Eastertide.

Please pray for the children, their families and staff. Schools remain under huge pressure from outside forces. Children are often vulnerable just because they are young, and schools are expected to do more and more for them and their families with rising staff costs and little to no extra funding.

As we partner with God's mission here in Downend, perhaps we can pray the Lord's Prayer with schools especially in mind:

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Julie Gardner

Growing Faith Chaplain

Youth

This last year has proved to be a time of transition and re-building in our youth ministry and it's been exciting to see how things have developed over these last six months. Numbers have grown, our young people have become a lot more integrated into the church community, and we've enjoyed a rich and varied programme of teaching and midweek activities.

The initial focus has been on the small core group of teenagers already connected with Christ Church – helping them to grow in their faith and build a strong sense of belonging. On Thursday evenings the activity programme has included sport, craft, drama, cooking, film nights and foodie events; usually rounded off with a Bible focus on a relevant theme. This is often the first point of entry into our youth ministry and it's been great to see group members invite their friends.

On Sunday mornings we seek to go deeper on matters of faith and this term have been exploring the gospel of Mark in parallel with the adult teaching programme. We've continued with the occasional Story Sunday where it's been great to hear the testimonies of other church members and our young people have also thrown themselves into serving through involvement in Sunday worship, Bubble Church and community events. We've enjoyed

'I love the fact that there's such a wide range of things to do'

linking in with The Mix each term at Woodies in town, and it's been a pleasure to host the Christ Church congregation for coffee and cake after services on a couple of occasions.

Many of our young people are hungry to grow in faith and it's exciting that three of them are hoping to be

either baptised or confirmed in the summer term. With the generosity of members of the congregation in supporting the 'Growing Younger' gift day recently, we hope to further strengthen our team so that even more young people are helped to discover Jesus and learn what it means to follow him. Our new group name 'Rooted' reflects those priorities.

Here are a few short quotes from our young people which express something of the value of Christ Church's youth ministry to them.

'I love the fact that there's such a wide range of things to do' Daniel

'An opportunity to meet my friends in a faith centred environment' Ruby

'I enjoy our trips to The Mix – it's great to feel part of the wider community' Eloise

Paul Peterson



Finance

The year began with the church in a stable financial position, having repaid all remaining Church re-ordering loans and Diocesan loan interest during 2023. The PCC was able to set a budget for 2024 at only a minimal deficit of £15k, enabling the funding of salaries and expenses of our staff, providing for the upkeep of the Church building, and payment of all administration and running costs. It also enabled the Church to honour its commitment to the Diocese and increase the parish share to £110k (2023: £95k).

The tithing of giving income received has underpinned donations during the year of £31.6k to mission partners. It is also important to highlight the significant fundraising undertaken by the youth during 2024, which provided additional gifts of £3.3k to Haven Home, India, over and above the mission tithe.

Generous levels of giving and grant income from the Diocese of Bristol, which is committed for a number of years, has supported the funding of

the schools' and children's ministry. From 2025 these ministries, together with the youth ministry, will be operated under the umbrella of the younger ministry' in keeping with Christ Church's mission of growing younger. We have recently witnessed wonderful provision for this key outreach through the 2025 gift day.

The net movement in funds for 2024 is +£11.9k. The generosity of the congregations means that income from regular giving and gift aid is only slightly down versus 2023, which is remarkable in such difficult economic circumstances. This commitment, together with generous legacy gifts of £10.2k and sound financial governance, has helped generate the overall net surplus.

The unrestricted funds (funds available for day to day church running) increased to £129k (2023: £107k), whilst restricted funds (funds available only for specific purposes) decreased to £41.0k (2023: £51.4k), the latter in the main due to the drawdown of funds from a previous

gift day for the children's workers salary and reduced CAP income.

The PCC would like to pass on its thanks to all who have contributed to the financial success of the church this past year. This simply would not be possible without the generosity of the congregation and the hard work and dedication of all involved in fundraising, financial oversight and administration, facilitating the hire of our buildings, and provision of financial governance and scrutiny.

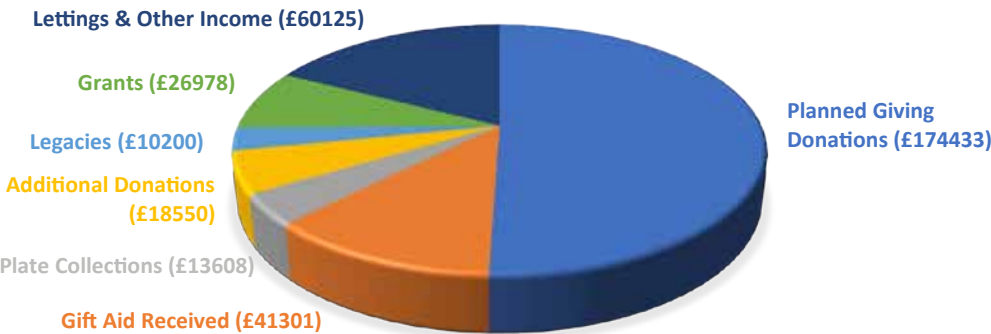
Notable thanks go to Gabrielle Foster in her role as our bookkeeper, the office team and members of the Giving 4 Life team (Dave Green, Adrian Harding, Adam Parfitt and Rev Paul Peterson).



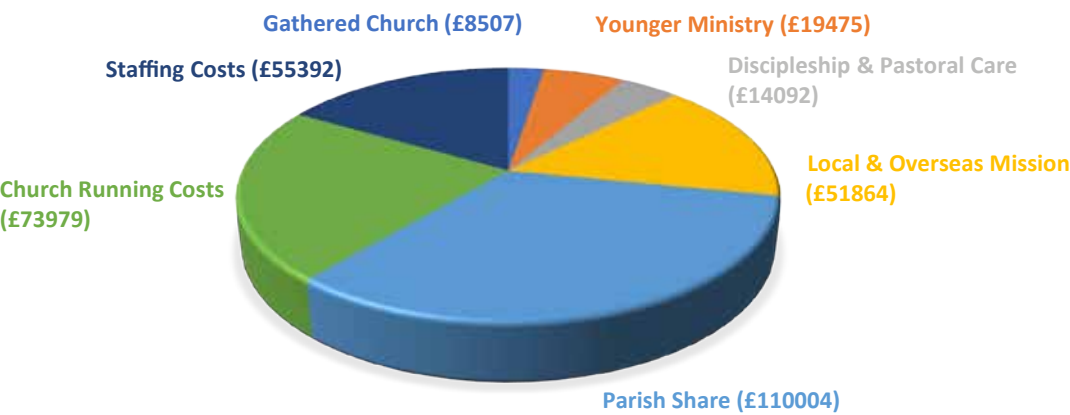
Nick Gale
Acting Treasurer

Income			Expenditure		
	£			£	
Planned giving donations	174,433	51%	Parish share	110,004	33%
Lettings and other income	54,590	16%	Church running costs	73,979	22%
Gift Aid received	41,301	12%	Staffing costs	55,392	17%
Grants	26,978	8%	Local and overseas mission	51,864	16%
Additional donations	18,550	5%	Younger ministry	19,475	6%
Plate collections	13,608	4%	Discipleship and pastoral care	14,092	4%
Legacies	10,200	3%	Gathered Church	8,507	3%
Other	5,535	2%			
Total	345,195		Total	333,313	

Sources of income



How we spent our income





0117 908 9867



christchurchdownend.com



office@christchurchdownend.com



[christchurchdownend](https://www.facebook.com/christchurchdownend)



[ChristChDownend](https://twitter.com/ChristChDownend)



[christchurchdownend](https://www.instagram.com/christchurchdownend)



Christ Church Downend