



West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Church Partnership



**Annual Report
for the year ending 31 December 2014**

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This report should be read in conjunction with the reports from the 4 local churches, available at <http://wswinlyd.org.uk/council/report>

Objectives for 2015

Our Partnership Council propose the following areas of particular focus for 2015:

- Work on training and enabling of other areas of ministry, especially schools worker training
- Expand our relationship with Bible Society
- Fine tune our working model - PC, Exec and church leadership teams -to further explore and refine our local hubs of mission and ministry.

Prayer for our Partnership

Almighty God,

As we face another year of continuing change we give thanks for your promise to walk alongside us as we travel.

Help us to keep our eyes on Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Spirit empower us to share the good news of Jesus' light and love with our communities and across the partnership, this we ask in Jesus name

Amen

to stand still, but to seek God's will and discover where we might serve him in a new way. We were all delighted when Gayle Bryon started work as our Schools worker in August visiting a number of Schools; planning our "Heroes and Saints" day on the 31st of October; a First World War memorial event; a partnership nativity and doing many assemblies and events in our schools. So far the work has been really well received and we are grateful for her skill and dedication.

Messy Church, Schools work and emerge are now in the process of seeking to integrate their activity, where possible, to strengthen and enhance our children's and youth work. We are all grateful to the three leaders of these pieces of work Mary Poole, Claire Camm and Gayle for their prayerful service.

During this year we have recognized a need to develop and train people in leading worship. The course we have developed is based on material taken from the 'Worship 4 today' course, and will help individuals who are called to lead worship across the Partnership. Look for results at the end of this year.

Stipendiary ministry can be a lonely place especially when circumstances change. I am extremely grateful to the Partnership Council for allowing the development of an executive which not only gives me Pastoral support, but also has some delegated authority to discuss ways of working in the future, and to be the first point of call for the denominations and the sponsoring body. That trust is valued. We continue to work at fluidity of communication between the executive, the Partnership council, our multiple denominations and the sponsoring body. I personally want say thank-you to the other members of the executive, Sue Green, Mark Dowling and Chris Scarisbrick for their support, fellowship and candour, who along with the wardens of St Mary's and the people of the Partnership, have been supportive to me and my family.

I believe we are stronger and more focused. We have seen, and will continue to see the gifts of God revealed, accepted, held and used by his people for building up the Kingdom of God. We know we face another year of challenge as the Deanery begin to look at the future of the Parish, but we are assured of God's presence with us.

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Charitable Objects

The purpose of our Partnership is to advance the Christian faith in West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze in accordance with the principles and practices of the Participating Churches. In achieving its purpose, the Partnership will engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):

- the celebration of public worship;
- the teaching of the Christian faith;
- mission and evangelism;
- pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved;
- the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and
- the support of other charities in the UK and overseas.

Administrative

West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Church Partnership is registered in England as a charity. Charity Reg no; 1141341. Our address is the Partnership Office, c/o Holy Trinity Church, Shaw Village Centre, Ramlease Drive, Swindon SN5 5PY

West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Church Partnership is a registered data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act. Our registration number is Z2669468.

The Partnership is registered to claim gift aid so if individuals want to give direct to either the general fund or to the work of Emerge, this can now be done tax efficiently. Our Bank Account is with CafCash P.O. Box 289, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA. Our Independent Examiner is Steve Fraser, Monahan's, 38 – 42 Newport Street, Swindon SN1 3DR.

This report is produced by the Partnership Council in accordance with the Charities Statement Of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2014 for the Financial Reporting Standard (FRS102)

Credits

Thanks to: Gayle Bryon, Claire Camm, Clive Deverell, Mark Dowling, Sue Green, Brenda Hicks, David Hoar, Mary and Ed Poole, Julie and Chris Scarisbrick, Andy Vernon.

Organisation

The partnership comprises four churches:

Holy Trinity Church, Shaw (HTS)
St Mary's Church, Lydiard Tregoze (SMLT)
Toothill Church
Westlea Church

who act together. We are classified by Churches Together in England as a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership. The Partnership is part of the Baptist Union, Church of England, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church (URC), and looks to the Swindon Churches Together Sponsoring Body for guidance and oversight.

Our clergy comprise those who have been duly authorised and appointed by our participating denominations. Revd Capt Clive Deverell is Team Minister (Church of England). Clive is posted at St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze, with responsibility across the remaining partnership.

Our partnership comprises one district of the Anglican parish of West Swindon and the Lydiards. The second district is comprised of All Saints Lydiard Millicent. The two districts have their own District Church Council (DCC) meetings to conduct Anglican business. We meet together occasionally for full Parochial Church Council (PCC) meetings, though most functions are effectively delegated to the DCCs.

Trustees

The trustees are the members of the Partnership Council (PC) (Article 8 of the Constitution). Anglican Members also constitute the District Church Council (DCC) when needed to conduct Anglican specific business, and we nominate representatives to the Anglican PCC.

The charity trustees have had due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

The Partnership Council (PC)

The PC is the main governance and representative body. Its main responsibilities are broadly grouped as Regulatory, Oversight and Governance. Other responsibilities, Ministry / Mission, Pastoral care and local Leadership, are delegated to the Local Church Committees (LCC) / Leadership Teams. A fuller

Minister's Report

Eph 4: 11-13 15b -16

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work

A year of transformation. We've experienced uncertainty which has led us to become on one hand, brave and on the other hand, circumspect.

Working as the only appointed member of staff, has meant some changes in where I am each Sunday.

There is a renewed confidence across the Partnership as we have put the past behind us and offered our future to God. There have been many blessings as the gifts of God have been lifted up in his people.

Pastoral and bereavement training for people from across the Partnership (our grateful thanks to Jan Partridge for leading this). A carefully crafted and delivered Lent course and a 24 hours of prayer.

The monthly Partnership, Prayer and Praise has brought people closer together. Thanks to the worship enabling group and a big thank you to Sarah Wilmott for being its secretary.

Across the Partnership, we have had over 40 Baptisms and 25 Weddings and Blessings, ably administered by Brenda in the partnership office. In September we had a visit from the Archbishop of Canterbury, who began his Saturday in the Diocese having ecumenical breakfast in Lydiard House, with ministers including Rev Jan Partridge. The Archbishop met Mark Dowling our Chair, ST Mary's Churchwardens Jacqueline Kirwan and Pat Watson along with Paul Gardner, chair of the building committee and many others in St Mary's. He also launched the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust Ride and Stride outside with a blessing and the sound of an air horn. A great morning had by all.

Around April, I approached the executive about whether we could employ a Schools worker, being very aware of how little I could do (apart from the odd assembly and being a governor at Oliver Tomkins). We felt whilst we waited (circumspect) for our financial future to become clearer it was important for us not

Partnership Financial Review

The Partnership's main source of income is the share from the churches; in 2014 three of them managed to meet the budgeted amount and Westlea were able to exceed it. We also collect money from office use and weddings and funerals fees. Virtually all of the fees income is then passed back out to the diocese or clergy, organist, vergers, clerks and the churches for the use of the building. Office income covers office supplies and photocopying costs etc.

The Partnership's main expenditure is the contributions to the parent bodies, the administrator salary and staff expenses. This is where the bulk of our charitable aims are met, however an increasing amount is done by volunteers which is not financially quantifiable. A small amount is then left for general partnership expenses including children's & youth work.

We have addressed the issue of our reserves held in conjunction with All Saints Lydiard Millicent. Reviewed with the aid of an independent arbiter, the division is now agreed and resolved. It is the partnership's policy to maintain sufficient unrestricted funds, equating to 6 months of expenditure in order to cover unplanned situations that may occur from time to time. At 31 December 2014 unrestricted reserves of £87,218 were held which were in excess of the required amount.

We have yet to quantify or resolve our outstanding debt to the Baptist pension Scheme; we are paying the arrears demanded, and anticipate the actuarial work being done in 2015. We look forward to a resolution

The Partnership looks after Emerge's finances in a restricted fund. They received grants from Zurich and the URC for general youth work as well as income from our churches, other donors and the young people. This money is then used to run the youth groups, training and the Crowdy's workshops covering salaries, expenses, running costs and equipment.

Our building funds, generated from grants, donations and fund-raising events, though consolidated into the partnership's accounts, are held and administered locally in each of the relevant churches. Responsibility for these funds is delegated to the individual churches' treasurers.

During the year we reviewed our financial controls as a result of the Parish now being split into two working divisions.

description of the current functions of the PC, DCC, PCC and LCC's can be found in the Partnership Constitution (2011) and in draft Standing Orders.

Clergy (ex officio)	Revd Capt Clive Deverell	
Partnership Council Chair	Mark Dowling	
Partnership Council Vice Chair	Vacant	
Churchwardens	Pat Watson	
(ex-officio members of the PCC and DCC, co-opted to PC)	Jacqueline Kirwan	
Other co-opted members	Mary Poole (Deanery Synod)	
Senior Steward	Mark Dowling	
Treasurer	Sue Green	
Secretary	Chris Scarisbrick	
Elected Members	Janet Clark	Rev Jan Partridge
	Peter Gilder	Julie Scarisbrick
	David Hoar	Chris Scarisbrick
	Steve Kershaw	Tish Vass
	Brenda Hicks	
Minutes secretary		

The PC met 7 times in 2014, once as a full PCC: January, February, April, June, September, and November. This was in addition to the Annual General Meeting on 23 March. Main PC topics during the year were:

- Safeguarding
- Plan the management of a new "two districts" operating model in the parish
- Income and expenditure; review of budget planning process
- Youth activity reports and review of our Emerge youth work
- Messy church
- Provision of courses for bereavement counsellors and worship leaders
- Appointment of a primary school children's worker

The Partnership Executive met 10 times in 2014, at intervals between PC meetings – to plan agendas and follow up on PC decisions.

Appointed Sub Groups handled specialist areas of work on behalf of the PC, and gave reports on progress. They included for 2014:

- Emerge Management team
- Emerge review body
- Messy Church team
- Worship Enabling Group

Risks

The Partnership has a number of risks to its activities which have been assessed at either PC or the Executive. These include:

- Risk of financial commitment, particularly relating to clergy. Reserves cover approx 6 month's stipends and expenses.
- Ongoing financial commitment to Baptist Pension Scheme shortfall.
- Limited resources available for work delegated to the Partnership Executive.
- Organisational and accountability risks relating to the Partnership's Policies and Procedures
- Structural risks due to the Partnership's Ecumenical nature, and membership trends in some churches.
- Unpaid voluntary contributions are not quantified in the report, but are substantial, almost all of our activities depend heavily on voluntary work.

The PC considers that these risks have been mitigated to the best practicable extent. They are monitored within the Partnership's governance processes.

Induction and Training of Trustees

There is no formal process for training of new or existing Trustees. However new PC members are made aware of their role and responsibilities through discussion and briefing before and at meetings.

External Representation

Swindon Churches Together Sponsoring Body

The Partnership has no formal representation at Swindon Churches Together Sponsoring Body (SCTSB). We have had constructive discussions with several of our denominational parents' representatives on that body, and they are all aware of our dependence. We are confident of their understanding and support.

Anglican Deanery and Diocese

Swindon Deanery Synod acts as a way of bringing together the Anglican congregations in Swindon and its outlying areas. It is a place where a number of topics can be discussed with the aim of sharing with everyone the strategic thinking and concerns of the wider diocese. Key topics over the past year have been:

- Finance – pledged giving within the Deanery needs to meet the costs of running churches some of which are in areas of economic need. Churches rose to this challenge and our giving to the Diocese rose by nearly 6% in 2014.
- Sustainability – a great challenge for all churches as declining clergy numbers are faced with population growth in new areas of Swindon. All churches are encouraged to prayerfully consider who may be called to ministry.
- Reaching out to others – how to develop a pioneering spirit in every church

In Partnership

Our monthly magazine "In Partnership", contains news of church and local events and has information and news from the wider church. It is currently produced 11 times each year and is published both as a paper magazine and on the Partnership web site.

Mission and Evangelism

Across the partnership, mission is contextual. For the most part each church is involved with mission and evangelism in their own communities, both the churches and the communities are very different in each area.

Messy Church and Emerge are obviously a key part of our mission and evangelism, see above.

Many schools visit our church buildings and we enjoy the opportunity to share our Christian life with them.

St Mary's folk have concentrated on maintaining relationships with staff and visitors to the house and park.

Our work in the garden of remembrance during Nov is greatly appreciated by the Royal British Legion nationally, the WW1 Centenary provided us with opportunity to help even more people remember.

Occasional Offices

Across the Partnership over 40 Baptisms and Dedication services have taken place. We do specific Baptism preparation for couples having their children baptised, and adults considering this move

We put forward 5 people for ecumenical confirmation in 2014.

Weddings at St Mary's continue to be popular, we try very hard to have the building open when there is a Wedding Fayre in the adjoining conference centre, and a lot of couples take advantage of the Walled Garden for photographs. Working with couples preparing for marriage is a real privilege and it is a joy. We conducted a marriage preparation course in March attended by 15 couples.

More funerals over the whole of Swindon are being conducted by either Civil Celebrants or retired Priests, this has impacted on our Partnership not only financially but pastorally. The Clergy emphasize that we always take a funeral in a sensitive manner, whatever the faith background of the family concerned and provide that all important pastoral follow up.

At St Mary's there are many lay people involved with clergy in supporting the occasional offices and we are grateful for their ministry. We also here record our thanks to Brenda who has done so much to administer Baptism preparation and Marriage preparation courses.

Partnership Office, Newsletter

Our Administrator Brenda Hicks prepares service sheets for several churches and edits and prints the partnership magazine.

Publicity and Communication

- We advertise monthly in the local Link Magazine, which includes information about our Partnership, the Office telephone number, web address and email address.
- We especially promote our major festivals of Christmas, Lent, Holy Week and Easter. We used a common Christmas Card design this year, with each church customising the dates for their local community. Brenda also produced joint information cards showing all the special Services and Events of this period.
- Generally each local church is responsible for its own publicity – this is through their Monthly Magazines or Weekly Notice Sheets. Our web sites are becoming more comprehensive and the usage graph increases year on year.

- Deanery links with Uganda – how can we develop these further?
It is encouraging that within the Partnership our churches have taken these issues seriously and recognise the need for growth and change

Ed Poole is Joint Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod, and a member of the Deanery Leadership Team. In the Autumn DLT members visited each PCC (including ours) with an invitation to pledge generously in support of Diocesan funding - and see the outcome noted above. The other part of the message was a challenge to work on issues relating to sustainability.

Across the Deanery and the Diocese we know 'we cannot go on as we are'. We have contributed to the early stages of forming the new Diocesan Strategy 2016-18 – to be finalised in 2015. This will encourage an outward focus to mission, effective collaboration and co-working among groups of Churches... just as we are seeking to do in our Church Partnership

Baptist Area

WEBA run the Partnership payroll for our administrator. The local Baptist churches do not meet together regularly, relying more on email communications in between occasional more open meetings. One of our members attended the Appointment service for the new WEBA Area Minister. We have revised our directory entry and intend to make more regular contact

Methodist Circuit

We have continued to enjoy communications this year between the Upper Thames Circuit and the Partnership; some of the clergy have also enjoyed leading worship in the Upper Thames Circuit churches. The churches have also enjoyed having the ministers and Local Preachers who have come to us and led worship.

We have 3 members of the Partnership who are Upper Thames Local Preachers and one Supernumerary minister (retired) all of whom are qualified and able to lead worship in the churches of the area. Several of our number attended the Appointment service for the new Circuit Superintendent Minister.

One of our members Mike Dilly is employed as chaplain at the local Methodist Homes Association care homes for the elderly.

URC

In Nov 2013 David Hoar was accredited by the URC as a Lay Preacher and stationed with us in March 2014. Among his preaching and leading efforts he undertakes our home communion ministry.

During the year the URC asked us to consider a question on Same-Sex marriage put to us by the General Assembly. Our discussion was convened by our Synod Pastoral Advisor Janet Gray.

The Partnership makes use of the URC Synod's Youth and Children's Work Officer for help with safeguarding training and other information.

We have yet to send a representative to URC Synod meetings.

School and College Links

New College

New College Chaplaincy is a Local Ecumenical Partnership supported by Swindon Churches Together and Interfaith Group, Swindon Deanery and Bristol Diocese. Ed Poole and a dedicated team of 5 others (ordained and lay) are in College each day, to support Students and Staff – it's a busy place. Highlights include Diversity Week, Armistice Day, main Festivals, our Sacred Space, and an active presence around the public spaces of the College.

Oliver Tomkins CofE

The governing body is made up of representatives of the Staff, Parents, the community, the Church, as well as having some members appointed by the Local Authority (LA). They are all volunteers who give up their free time and have various legal responsibilities and duties.

Safeguarding

We have received new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on 7 people during the year (inc. renewals), and have in total 80 DBS-checked volunteers working regularly or occasionally with those who need safeguarding

During the year we undertook a review of historic abuse in church situations, and fed into that national initiative led by the Methodist Church. There were no safeguarding concerns raised. We also reviewed our entire safeguarding policy, process and practise in conjunction with a CofE Diocesan survey. Outcomes include improving and monitoring our notice board information, and auditing our policy to ensure fair recruitment of ex-offenders.

We have had just one minor issue this year. A worker made some unwise choices with regard to electronic communications outside our policy guidelines. This was rectified and we are confident this will not be repeated. No children were in danger, and no other actions are required.

Usual Sunday Attendance

	2014		2013		2012		2011		2010		2009		2008	
	Adult	Child												
St Mary's	72	12	69	12	85	12	71	15	46	6	39	8	47	5
Holy Trinity	23	2	27	3	25	5	26	5	28	6	28	7	33	10
Toothill	27	5	28	4	32	7	31	5	29	7	36	6	40	10
Westlea	25	9	23	9	24	10	23	11	22	12	22	12	22	11
Total	147	28	147	28	166	34	151	36	132	31	125	33	142	36

Joint Partnership Worship

Several joint Services were organised again in 2014. The 5th Sunday Services have become a regular fixture, and are supported by all churches. We sometimes move the joint services from a 5th Sunday to avoid key Festival Sundays, in 2014 Mothering Sunday. The Joint morning Services in 2014 were:

- 23rd March at HTS, included Partnership AGM
- 5th March, Ash Wednesday at St Mary's
- 17th April Maundy Thursday at St Mary's
- 18th April, Good Friday morning, afternoon and evening
- 20th April Easter Sunrise at St Mary's
- 30th June at Toothill
- 30th November at Westlea
- 28th December at St Mary's

In 2014 we started meeting for a joint Partnership Prayer and Praise service in the afternoon of the last Sunday of each Month. We meet at St Mary's, usually in the walled garden in Lydiard Park during the summer, and at Holy Trinity Shaw in the colder months.

We met as a partnership on Tuesday evenings during Lent for shared Bible study and preparation for Easter

Local Church activities

There is much more that happens in each of our local churches. The local activities are well described in their local Annual Reports, copies of which can be obtained from the Partnership Office or available online at <http://wswinlyd.org.uk/council/report>

Denominationally Authorised Ministers	
Rev Capt. Clive Deverell	CofE Team Minister
(vacancy)	Free Church Minister

We are grateful to the following members of the Partnership who lead activities across our churches:

Denominationally Authorised Ministers	
Rev Jan Partridge	(Methodist Circuit Supernumary) - special responsibility in the partnership for pastoral training
Mr Gordon Partridge	Methodist Lay Preacher
Mrs Rachel Dowling	Methodist Lay Preacher
Mr Mark Dowling	Methodist Lay Preacher
Mr David Hoar	URC Lay Preacher

Locally Appointed Ministers	
Rev Mike Dilly	Congregational Minister
Mrs Claire Camm	Youth Work Manager
Mrs Gayle Bryon	Schools worker

Other Groups:	
Westlea Leadership Team	Holy Trinity Shaw Worship team
Local Church Home Group	Worship Enabling Group
Team Toothill	St Mary's Ukulele ladies
St Mary's Worship team	

Our Administrative and support team

Administrative and Support	
Mrs Brenda Hicks	Partnership Administrator
Mr Mark Dowling	Partnership Chair
Mrs Sue Green	Partnership Treasurer
Mr Chris Scarisbrick	Partnership Secretary
Mrs Julie Scarisbrick	Safeguarding Coordinator

Our areas of particular focus in 2014 were:

- Reach out to Children and Young people through our local churches and together via Messy Church, Schools work and Emerge
- Provide structure and support so lay members may grow their ministry in our churches and Partnership
- Work towards a solution for the imbalance in the number of our salaried clergy.

Children and Young People

Local church work

For activities in local churches, see the individual church reports available online at <http://wswinlyd.org.uk/council/report>

Emerge

During this year we engaged with 75 different young people aged 10-22 through the Monday, Tuesday and Saturday youth groups at Shaw plus lunch time group at Bradon Forest, Sunday church groups and Swindon Young Carers group. Many of those attended more than one of our groups.

Staffing: Claire continued as Project Manager (12.5hrs pw) with Imogen (Placement Student) until July then two part time students until December.

Training: Claire continued with Special Needs Level 3 course. Three young Trainee leaders continued to develop their skills across the groups; we also welcomed Lindsay on board in November as a Helper at Monday club as part of her DOE programme.

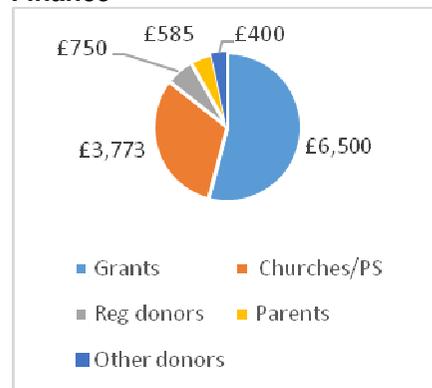
Project News: Confirmations – two young people were baptised/confirmed in the summer following our Alpha course.

Most of the team (inc. two young leaders) went on a weekend retreat at Lee Abbey in the summer, much enjoyed.

The usual downturn in numbers at Remix took place in the summer term but Autumn term saw a good growth across all groups with many new year 7-8's attending Remix and several referrals from Aiming Hi to the Special Needs groups. Remix young people engaged in fundraising for Tearfund's anti-child trafficking campaign, raising £600 through a sponsored run and Christmas Show. Nearly all young people from the whole project took part in the latter and attendance figures were double the previous year. We also had some very good Bible discussion and reflection sessions during the year with Remix.

We ran a one off project for Swindon Young Carers in the Autumn, following a grant from Greenbelt Trust; 10 young people came to a series of 4 weekend workshops, teaching drama techniques and incorporating lots of games! A final performance for parents was well attended.

Finance



Income was £12,007 with grant income remaining much the same as year before; other income sources down.

Approx 84% income was spent on staffing youth work; training; meetings; admin & comms. The remainder on resources and equipment.

Working with the rest of the Partnership

Claire and Gayle Bryon began to meet to explore how they could mutually support one another in their work. Claire and two of the emerge young leaders helped at Schools Easter Workshop at Shaw, led by Gayle and the Prayer Stations Day at Oliver Tomkins in December.

Outcomes. We have continued to fulfil our project outcomes:

- To provide a positive focus in the community for young people in West Swindon.
- To provide a safe and caring environment for young people.
- To provide a programme which facilitates development of relationships to support their emotional, social and spiritual development.
- To enable young people to develop their gifts, skills and relationships through a sustainable programme which meets their needs.

Aims. We would like to welcome more volunteers from the churches of the partnership to come and join us. In order to fully meet the fourth outcome above and ensure sustainability we now need to grow our volunteer base by 30%. Current Volunteer ages range from 18-70+ so age is no barrier!

We will develop links with the Partnership Schools Work programme and Messy Church to add value to the Partnership children's and youth work.

The Community

Membership is expressed through the Local Churches, and each congregation is responsible for encouraging regular attendees into membership. Within our different church traditions there are slight differences in understanding of membership.

Membership Summary

	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
St Mary's	75	76	74	70	59	73	69	76	80	87
Holy Trinity	33	31	36	42	38	40	42	37	37	55
Toothill	36	32	39	42	40	39	37	35	34	41
Westlea	30	31	26	26	27	28	25	25	25	24
Total	174	170	175	180	164	180	173	173	176	207

(Historic figures in the table for comparison, are adjusted to reflect altered organisation of the partnership in 2013)

Ministry and weekly services

The worship rota is arranged across the Partnership. The Clergy, Local Preachers and Lay Ministers all lead services and preach not only in their 'home' church but also in the other partner churches and some lead worship in churches in the Methodist Circuit. The Methodist circuit also contributes worship leaders.

Our partnership's main Services take place on a Sunday Morning with each of our Churches having a thriving and enthusiastic congregation, several with crèches, children's and young people groups also being provided. The communion services generally vary between Anglican order and a Free-Church style.

holiday activities for children and their families. We thank the twenty five adults and ten young people who have helped run activities over the past year and we look forward to working with you all again. We should all have 'great expectations' for our work with children and families here in West Swindon over the next year.

What really matters.

The child who asked, "Where is Jesus?" while visiting the Church with his Class.

The child who wrote prayers for her Dad who had died earlier in the year and her friend who supported her in her sad moments of reflection.

The child who shared their 'hopes and dreams' for the future, having had fled their home country the previous year.

Children eagerly discussing a 'Bible' story they have never heard before.....

The child who says 'in my faith we have your Jesus but he is called Isa'...

The parent who says of the 'Nativity'...this is the start of our Christmas....

Lay development

Lay people are key to the Mission of the Partnership and its churches. Individuals have taken on more responsibility as the number of clergy decreases, and people continue to develop. This year we have provided training in pastoral skills and bereavement counselling and have planned a worship leaders' course for next year. Both Emerge and Messy Church have seen leaders develop new skills. We have employed a primary schools worker.

Denominational Balance

During the year it became evident that our financial situation does not allow us to plan to have more paid clergy appointed to us in the immediate future. For the moment we intend to address our perceived denominational imbalance by the growing use of denominationally authorised lay ministers and locally appointed lay ministry.

We will co-ordinate the Mix Community Festival which will meet the above outcomes, plus will help build our relationships in the church partnership and with the local community.

Messy Church

In West Swindon we are proud to be part of a world wide Messy Church organisation that has been going now for 10 years. Started as a fun way for local families to enjoy being church together it now stretches as far as Poland and New Zealand and involves 2,200 churches. Each church is unique but all share the themes of fun, creativity, celebration and hospitality with a Bible link. More at www.messychurch.org.uk.

Our own Messy church is nearly 5 years old and has been a focus for mission throughout the year. We have a nucleus of 7 regular committed families. During 2014 about 14 more families have come and stayed for one or more sessions, some have children being baptised within the Partnership others drop in because they know they will enjoy doing things together. A great team of 16+ people from all our churches contribute enthusiasm, commitment and a willingness to get a bit messy; they share in leading craft activities, cooking and washing up and leading worship. We have made manger cakes, balloon powered cars, and mini parachutes plus shared in times of quiet prayerfulness.

We meet on the second Sunday of each month at Shaw. Interested? Come along and find out what we do and best of all bring along a family you know.

Primary Schools work

There are eight Primary schools in our Partnership: Brook Field, Hazlewood, Millbrook, Oliver Tomkins, Peatmoor, Shaw Ridge, Tregoze and Westlea.

Our commitment to serve the educational needs of our local schools has been whole heartedly welcomed by all the schools visited. Gayle now has regular contact with 6 of the schools and has met with each of the RE Co-ordinators to understand their schools approach to RE and to find out how we can best work with them. The schools have been particularly receptive of offers to share in Collective Worship, Church visits and special activity sessions such as 'Christmas Unwrapped' or the 'Advent Prayer Space'.

17 acts of **Collective Worship** have been given in 6 of our schools using a variety of themes and Christian Festivals. Approximately 1,800 children have shared in at least one Christian based Collective Worship.

Easter activities. In Brook Field Primary sixty Foundation Stage children made an Easter Garden and heard the Easter Story using 'Resurrection Eggs'. In Year 2 sixty children enjoyed an afternoon of interactive dramatic re-telling of the Easter Story.

RE lessons have been supported in Peatmoor, Brook Field and Oliver Tomkins, the lessons focussed on the Bible, Zacchaeus and Prayer.

A teacher said. *"The prayer workshop was a complete success because it enabled the children to understand quite complex concepts through a child friendly and engaging way. The variety of activities enabled all the children to access knowledge and understanding using their learning strengths, be that through kinaesthetic, visual, or verbal learning styles regardless of their ability, in a free flowing exploratory way. The suggestions made by Gayle on ways to approach the subject of prayer helped me to see how this aspect of RE could be approached in a much more accessible way. The children were able to refer to this day later on in the term, showing the true depth of understanding they had acquired."*

The **WW1 Commemoration** held at St Mary's was a very special community event. The singers of Brook Field and Westlea Schools sang their hearts out. The Church was filled with people of all ages reflecting, learning and remembering together. On one postcard left at the end of the afternoon someone had written *"to be here this afternoon listening to my grand-daughter and the other children singing the songs I remember, is just one of the loveliest experiences."*

The **Advent** Prayer Space at Oliver Tomkins was a very spiritual event for all involved. KS2 and Year 2 (approximately 200 children) visited the Prayer Space during the day. The children were amazing, all classes showed great enthusiasm and engagement with the prayer activities.

Quote from SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) at Oliver Tomkins: *"The school's Christian character has a high profile and clearly shapes the approach to attendance and inclusion by ensuring that all children have equal opportunities to participate in all school activities. The school worker, recently appointed by the church, enables children to have regular access to thoughtful and imaginative experiences to support the development of their personal spirituality."*

Ninety children took part in '**Christmas Unwrapped**' in Peatmoor and thirty children took part in Hazlewood Academy. This is where the children 'unwrapped' boxes containing part of the Christmas Story and completed a simple craft activity.

"The KS1 Christmas workshop was a great success. The children thoroughly enjoyed the interaction and the various approaches to the Christmas story. Their understanding of different elements was embedded through the hands on resources and their 'take away' items."

Sixty children from Brook Field and 50 children from Hazlewood Academy made a Christingle and our large Nativity Characters had a wonderful Posada Journey in Oliver Tomkins Infants. The Brook Field Carol Service filled Holy Trinity to absolute capacity and it was wonderful to share in this beautiful inclusive service, the Christmas message shared to people of all faiths and none.

Church Visits: Brook Field Year 1 and 3 visited HTS, Hazlewood Academy Year 1 and 3 visited Toothill Church and Peatmoor visited St Mary's.

School Bible Clubs: Sue Vernon and Eddie Koppoe run very successful, valued and well attended Bible Clubs in Tregoze Primary and Oliver Tomkins Primary.

Holiday Activity Days: Our holiday activity days have given us the opportunity to mission to children and families in our local community. 'Footsteps to the Feast' and 'Heroes and Saints' brought us into contact with 18 local families.

Nativity: It is still exciting to find a new way to explore the Christmas Story. I give thanks that our resident script writer Mark Taylor is so versatile and that we have such an amazing team of helpers. This year our Partnership venture 'Dazzling Greetings' expressed the peace and joy of Christmas to all who took part in the service. The children certainly dazzled me with their joy and enthusiasm. We had children and young people from 4 – 19 years singing, dancing, acting, praying and laughing side by side.

This year has been a sharp learning curve, full of challenge and blessing. Gayle has met many extraordinary adults and children in the past few months and is invigorated by learning of all the excellent work that is taking place across Swindon in our churches and schools. Mary Poole, Claire Camm and Gayle have met to develop joined up working across all areas of children's, family and youth work for the Partnership, an information Leaflet being the first joint project.

The response to the Gift Day on Education Sunday was inspirational, demonstrating the desire within the Partnership to serve our community by educating children and welcoming their families into our Churches. The financial gifts mean we can develop further quality RE experiences for our schools and fun