



West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Church Partnership



**Annual Report draft 4
for the year ending 31 December 2016**

Contents	2
Reference and Administrative Details	3
Charitable Objects.....	3
Administrative.....	3
Credits	3
Structure, Governance and Management	4
Organisation	4
Trustees	4
External Representation.....	6
School and College Links.....	9
Safeguarding	9
Areas of focus for 2016	10
Develop teaching themes.....	10
Regular prayer times.....	10
Enabling outreach	11
Financial appeal	12
The Community	13
Ministry and weekly services.....	13
Emerge Youthwork.....	16
Primary Schools work	18
Messy Church	20
Occasional Offices	21
Partnership Office, Newsletter	22
Partnership Financial Review	23
Achievements and Performance	24
Minister's Report	24
Plans for the Future	27
Objectives for 2017	27
Prayer for our Partnership.....	27

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 2017

Our Partnership Council propose the following:

- Press forward with a youth and children's work review.
- Deepen our link with Katikama Sebamale Primary School, Luwero Diocese, Uganda.
- Review communication and understand our various internal structures so communication and ownership of mission/projects can improve.

Prayer for our Partnership

*Eternal Father, Creator, Son and Spirit;
At the start of a new year within our Church Partnership
We ask for your help in letting go the past
and looking to our future together.
We would lay down our failures and weaknesses
And step joyfully into the future you are creating with us.
Be with us whenever we meet;
in twos and threes,
as congregations and
as a united Church family.
Strengthen us all to work for
the coming of your kingdom with
faith, courage and gentle determination
Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*

Amen

Senior Steward) have been attending the partnership council, their wisdom and support is gratefully received.

I personally want say thank you to Brenda in the office for all that she does to support me and all of us across the Partnership. My thanks also to the other members of the executive Sue Green, Mark Dowling, Trevor Day and Chris Scarisbrick for their support, fellowship and candour especially when things have been bumpy. They and the wardens at St Mary's and Holy Trinity and the people of the Partnership have been supportive to me and my family.

We are wounded and scarred from our past and for some that still is shown in a reluctance to see the new thing happening and as a result we can be a bit insular.

We have weathered storms and we will weather those to come and the road has been twisted and more bends might appear.

We have crawled on our knees at times thinking what next.

But to build God's kingdom. "We belonged together"

We have climbed mountains that are bigger than our plans because God is bigger than those plans and we know we are in his hands.

We have held each other's hands and supported and cared for each other

We have watched miracles like those who have come to faith and stepped forward and affirmed it and I believe there are many more to come.

So to build God's kingdom. "We belong together"

because we know

"if it wasn't for God's mercy and His grace,
There's no way we would be standing in this place,
But because He has been faithful,
Every step along the way,"

So to build God's kingdom "Here we are together"

So to build God's kingdom in West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze, " Here we are together" giving thanks for the past year, faithfully looking to the future, striding with God every step of the way!

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 enabling individuals to give tax efficiently either to the general fund or to the work of Emerge. 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.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with **the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102** issued on 16 July 2014, the **Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)** and the **Charities Act 2011**.

Credits

Thanks to: Gayle Bryon, Claire Camm, Janet Clarke, Trevor Day, Clive Deverell, Mark Dowling, Gerald England, Sue Green, Brenda Hicks, David Hoar, Ed and Mary Poole, Chris Scarisbrick, Mark Taylor

Organisation

The partnership comprises four churches, acting together:

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

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. Rev Capt Clive Deverell is Team Minister (Church of England and Authorised to Serve in the Upper Thames Circuit of the Methodist Church) with responsibility across the partnership and posted at St Mary's Lydiard Tregoze. Rev Trevor Day is Assistant Minister (Church of England) working across the 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). Anglican Members also constitute the District Church Council (DCC) when needed to conduct Anglican specific business, and we nominate representatives to the Anglican Parochial Church Council (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 responsibilities are 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 description of the current

Holy Trinity is much more financially secure and can now begin to look how it uses its new dais creatively.

We have seen more work done in our Schools and additional activities for children in the holidays - a lot of it based in Holy Trinity. The development of after School activities in Toothill on a Friday. Community Service in Westlea with litter picking and enormous amount of work around Remembrance at St Mary's.

As a whole, the renewed confidence across the whole Partnership is very apparent. We have a staggering number of people, volunteered to be involved in Messy Church, Schools work, Youth work, leading worship and in pastoral care.

Look at our Primary School's work, volunteers from every Church have been involved, from students returning to University to those sharing their wisdom and skills well past statutory retirement.

The worship enabling group "Veg Patch" continues to develop resources for us all; encourage and build the skills of those leading worship and to complete the preaching plan. A big thank you to Sarah Wilmott for being its secretary.

The continued joined up thinking that is developing between our Messy Church, Schools work and Emerge is encouraging. We are all grateful to the three leaders of these pieces of work Mary Poole, Gayle Bryon and Claire Camm for their prayerful service, and creative gifts and skills.

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.

This coming year we will be looking at our communication channels and at accountability within our Churches and across the Partnership.

A number of our Churches face dramatic change, particularly Westlea. We give thanks for their willingness to face the challenges of the future, and their preparations. I would like to thank Rev Mike Dilly for all he has contributed to the Partnership, his love, generosity and passion to see people come to know the living Lord Jesus has been clear to see over many years. I know many of you have been touched by his enormous pastoral heart. Not only will Westlea miss him, we all will and we pray God's blessing on him and Wendy at this time.

As we continue to move to a single lead minister model we will face challenges however I do feel we are held in God's hands. The Rev Gerald England (URC) and Rev Keith Osborn (Methodist Superintendent) and Andrew Fleet (Methodist

Minister's Report

Here we stand, here we are
With all our wounds and battle scars
From all the storms and all the wars we've weathered together
We had no way of knowing when
We started way back there and then
How the road would twist and turn and bend
We just knew we belonged together

And if it wasn't for God's mercy and His grace
There's no way we would be standing in this place
But because He has been faithful
Every step along the way
Here we are together

We've climbed up mountains higher than
Were ever in our hopes and plans
We've held onto each other's hands
Watched miracles unfold together
And we've crawled on our hands and knees
Through valleys cold and dark and deep

An extract from **Together** by Steven Curtis Chapman

2016 has been a year, when on the face of it, little seems to have changed. Yet if you look closer, the move towards Hubs, begun in 2015, has led to the continuation of fortnightly midweek worship, more Schools work and related activities at Toothill.

The Youth Fellowship, directed at those young people attending our Churches, has faced challenges, but our young people are closer to each other than they have been in a long while - our thanks to Westlea.

The problems with resourcing Remix have resulted in changes to our Youth Work aimed at those outside the Church and that situation is under review, please pray for all those impacted.

St Mary's has been successful in gaining funding for the first part of its restoration and reordering. Over 8,000 visitors have visited in 2016. The introduction of more prayer resources has been a positive.

functions of the PC, DCC, PCC and LCCs can be found in the Partnership Constitution (2015) and in draft Standing Orders.

Clergy (ex officio)	Revd Capt Clive Deverell Rev Trevor Day	
Partnership Council Chair	Mark Dowling	
Partnership Council Vice Chair	Vacant	
Treasurer	Sue Green	
Secretary	Chris Scarisbrick	
Churchwardens and Synod reps (ex-officio members of PCC and DCC, co-opted to PC)	Pat Watson Jacqueline Kirwan Mary Poole	
Circuit Superintendant Minister and Senior Steward	Rev Keith Osborn Andrew Fleet	
Elected Members	Gayle Bryon Claire Camm Janet Clark Rev Mike Dilly	Peter Gilder David Hoar Steve Kershaw Rev Jan Partridge
Minutes secretary	Brenda Hicks	

The PC met 6 times in 2016, January, March, May, July, September, and November. This was in addition to the Annual General Meeting on 10 April and a full PCC meeting on 21 April.

Main PC topics during the year were:

- Safeguarding
- Income and expenditure; review of budget planning process
- Youth activity reports and review of our Emerge youth work, attempts to augment our volunteer base
- Children's activities and review of our primary schools work
- Approving foundation governors and candidates for ordination
- Messy Church
- Our parish boundaries, still under discussion with the CofE Deanery leadership

The Partnership Executive met 10 times in 2016, 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 2015:

- Emerge Management team
- Messy Church team
- Primary Schools work team
- The "Veg Patch" – our worship planning 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 denominational contributions. Reserves cover approx 6 month's normal expenditure
- 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.

The PC considers that these risks have been mitigated to the best practicable extent. There is one risk that isn't so well mitigated:

- Unpaid voluntary contributions are not quantified in the report, but are substantial, almost all of our activities depend heavily on volunteer goodwill, time and effort. This aspect of our work is under review

The risks 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

Mary has represented West Swindon Partnership when it has met 3 times over the past year. Most Anglican churches within the Deanery send a representative and it is a good time to connect with one another, the Bristol Diocese and the wider Anglican Communion.

This year the main emphases have been:

- Keeping up to date with discussions within Diocesan and General Synods. The debate about human sexuality is an ongoing one.
- Bristol Diocese is committed to helping its church schools succeed and is shortly to open two secondary schools in the area.

Partnership Financial Review

The Partnership's main source of income is the share from the churches. We get a few donations straight to the partnership. We also collect money from 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. We do almost no public fundraising.

The Partnership's main expenditures are contribution to the parent bodies, the administrator salary, the schools worker 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 Hook cemetery maintenance.

The URC SW Synod holds funds on deposit relating to the West Swindon Manse, the money received is from rental income and is expecting to be used for repairs and maintenance of which some £10869.82 was spent in 2016. At the end of 2016 the amount held was £16,393.

The Partnership looks after Emerge's finances in a restricted fund. In 2016 they received grants from the URC SW Synod and Zurich as well as income from our churches, other donors and the young people. This money is used to run youth groups, training, workshops for children with special needs, and covers salaries, expenses 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.

In the consolidated accounts the total unrestricted income was £134,909 and restricted was £31,743. The unrestricted income was down £23.5k on last year mainly due to the manse figures being included in the accounts for the first time last year.

The total unrestricted expenditure was £128,147 and restricted was £48,955. The unrestricted expenditure was up £16.4k on last year but this was mainly due to building work at Toothill and the manse and increased giving to the denominations.

The reserves being carried forward were £138,171 for unrestricted and £46,186 for restricted. The restricted funds are being held against future building related work and the youth group funds.

The individual churches and the partnership try to keep 6 months of expenditure as reserves. The churches are slightly under/over this but the partnership has more reserves than this as there was uncertainty over future staffing levels would be. The extra reserves will be used for increased cost of ministry.

Our financial controls were reviewed and found to be effective and adequate.

This period was an opportunity for me to don uniform and just be there in the Field of Remembrance, for whoever came in during the day. Sometimes, it was cold, sometimes just wet, and other times both cold and wet. Above all, it was not so much a “poppy-field” but a “mission-field” and a place for quiet meditation and special conversations. People came from far and wide (Cornwall, the Midlands, Kent, Cambridgeshire, ...) just to be there for a member of their family or a close friend, who they wanted to remember. Thank you to Paul, Jacqueline and Andrew for their support throughout that time.

During 2016 we held a church family funeral at Toothill and another at the crematorium for a member at Westlea.

Partnership Office, Newsletter

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

Publicity and Communication

- In 2016 we advertised monthly in the local Link Magazine, which includes information about our Partnership, the Office telephone number, web address and email address. We will not continue this in 2017 due to budget constraints.
- We especially promote our major festivals of Christmas, Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Brenda produced joint information cards showing all the special Services and Events of the Christmas period.
- Generally each local church is responsible for its own publicity – this is through their Monthly Magazines or Weekly Notice Sheets. Our web site traffic increases year on year.

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 produced 11 times each year and is published both as a paper magazine and on the Partnership web site at <http://wswinlyd.org.uk/news/>

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>

- How to create better connections with God, each other and our communities. A toolkit has been produced which all parishes are asked to discuss and consider their response.
- How best to finance our work within parishes with a review of the parish share system. This has led to increased expectations of financial contributions from most parishes.
- How to promote and develop our work with children and young people. Dan Jones, Diocesan Children’s and Youth Worker is assisting with this across the Deanery and within our Partnership.

Swindon Deanery contains parishes that differ in churchmanship and social type and composition; in its meetings I am always impressed by a common desire to follow Jesus and make him known to others. Times when representatives can share experiences as a way of supporting one another are especially valuable.

Ed has continued as Joint Lay Chair of the Swindon Deanery Synod; its current term ends mid- 2017. He serves also as a member of the Deanery Leadership Team. Around the Deanery the DLT has sought to champion the vision and current priorities of the Diocese – encouraging a climate for

- *Making Disciples*
- *Developing Leaders, and*
- *Engaging Younger Generations*

Area Dean Simon Stevenette is now thankfully recovering from his serious illness in the Autumn. This has been a challenging time for the DLT, as the retirement of the Bishop of Bristol comes later in 2017. The Deanery has also renewed its links with the Diocese of Luwero in Uganda, and a small group from the Swindon Deanery is making a visit there in February.

Clive is a member of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (which examines and grants faculties for CofE property etc). He continues as an Initial Vocation advisor and is trained by the Diocese to be a work consultant and mentor. Trevor has some wider responsibilities too, cadet chaplaincy and coordination of voluntary chaplaincy at Bristol Cathedral.

Baptist Area

Our relationship with the local Baptist organisation is more distant than with our other denominations. We think this is essentially because there is no central hierarchy that takes responsibility for us, its not the Baptist way. The onus is on us

to contact the Baptist organisation and take part. This has been dependant, at our end, on just a few people. We have had people attend a couple of the regional updates, to worship together and to hear, for example, about a newly built church opened on the new estate in Cirencester.

Methodist Circuit

We have enjoyed the continued input from the Circuit to our council meetings and to the staff team from Superintendent Keith Osborn and Senior Steward Andrew Fleet. It has also been good to welcome Local Preachers from the circuit to lead worship in our churches.

Rev Clive Deverell applied for, and was granted, recognition, and was Authorised to Serve as a Methodist Minister in the Upper Thames Circuit.

URC

Revd. Gerald England assumed the role of URC Synod Pastoral Advisor at the beginning of July 2016. His role includes attending as many Partnership meetings as possible, and feeding in and taking back any information / news to the Synod Pastoral Committee. He has also led services at St. Mary's and Toothill Methodist, and will be leading worship at Holy Trinity Shaw at the end of February. Gerald is using the fourth and fifth Sundays of each month to be available to lead worship in his new area of responsibility which includes Swindon and the Wiltshire United Area.

David Hoar has been appointed Area Worship and Preaching Advocate by Synod, and will be arranging meetings with Local / Lay preachers in the area to find out what training and support they may require. David has also led worship in the Partnership and further afield outside of the area. Rev Trevor day and David led the worship for Her Majesty the Queens Celebratory Service.

We have requested of the URC Synod, that Clive be recognised as a URC Minister of Word and Sacrament, we expect this to be agreed in 2017

Other local working relationships

We continue to work closely with Gateway on the Marriage Course. After joining them for a joint Alpha course in the Spring, we decided to try it on our own in the Autumn.

The constitutional crisis affecting Swindon Churches Together has concerned us, but we hope it will be resolved satisfactorily.

We keep a prayerful eye in the activities of the Good News for Swindon grouping without committing ourselves to join.

craft tables and in all sorts of ways. If circumstances changed for our regular helpers we might not continue in our present form so we are constantly reminded to be flexible and to rely on God. As a team we're still learning and trying to improve so that we can 'be church' learning and enjoying God's ways together.

Occasional Offices

Across our West Swindon Partnership, 2016 has been an exciting year of 'ministry' in the "pastoral" or; encompassing the "occasional offices".

Confirmation: Moya and Callum (at opposite ends of the age spectrum) were confirmed as full members of our partnership of churches at Holy Trinity, Shaw on 23rd November 2016. The service, the worship and the occasion were very special and spiritually uplifting for all who attended.

Home Visits & Communion: It is always a special time, to be with those who are no longer able to get out of their homes and it's been a privilege to be able to share Holy Communion with several people. When asked, "where is your church" ... my answer is usually ... "where-ever we are together".

Baptisms: I won't list the 14 children [and some associated God-parents], who were baptised during 2016 at St Mary's, along with 3 at Toothill, except to say, that each was, without exception, busy, joyous and different, with children of various ages. With the slightly older children, one can always get them to check that the water is the right temperature before we start. We also dedicated one child at Westlea.

Marriage/Weddings: Equally, our 10 weddings during 2016 were different and uplifting. It's also great to see those married couples, again, when they return with their children for Baptism [as we will be seeing, several times during 2017].

Remembrance: This year, for the first time, in November we were responsible for leading the worship on behalf and with the Royal British Legion for the opening of the Poppy Field of Remembrance in the Walled Garden at Lydiard Park. This year it was one of only Seven such "poppy fields" throughout the United Kingdom, over 20,000 fallen service-men and women were remembered by name [and some with photos] by a small poppy-Cross. Our Field of Remembrance remembered those who died during the more recent conflicts of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Field opened on Thursday 10th November in the morning, and every day after a short service of remembrance and 2 minutes silence took place in the garden at 11am and 2pm. On the 11th Nov'16 a formal Remembrance service was held, and again on Remembrance Sunday, 13th Nov'16 am at Lydiard Park, Hook and at all our partnership churches. We closed the garden on 20th Nov'16

The Launch of the new RE curriculum for Swindon in November has already offered us new opportunities for working in Partnership with our schools in 2017.

It has been a fabulous year where we have been able to develop and grow our schools work. If we are to continue to expanding our mission to schools and local families, the development of our volunteer base in terms of numbers and skills remains our highest priority. We will need a bigger core of regular helpers and an ever wider net of volunteers who can help occasionally. It can take considerable promotion and encouragement to get volunteers for all the activities, especially our holiday clubs. It would be wonderful if we, as Partnership, could develop a collaborative enthusiasm and willingness to volunteer our time eagerly, excited by the privilege and joy of sharing our faith with others.

As our schools work journey continues.....

May we continue to bring Religious Education alive in our local schools through our care and creativity.

May we continue to explore new ways of being Church in our local community.

May our faith be daring and courageous.

May we be ambassadors for Christ as we develop new and stronger relationships with all those we meet.

Messy Church

West Swindon has met regularly throughout the year on the 2nd Sunday of each month at Holy Trinity Shaw.

Our format of games and crafts, a celebration time and a simple meal together works well and it has been encouraging to see both adults and children playing a greater role in our celebrations. Over the year we have welcomed 12 different families and we are moderately successful in linking with families bringing their children for baptism. There is some crossover with the holiday activity days and it would be good to see more of these children joining us.

The Messy church magazine produced by the Bible Reading Fellowship provides us with lots of ideas and inspiration. We have also been confident enough to create our own programme, notably to celebrate the birthday of 'The Servant Queen'. Everyone had a booklet about her majesty to take home: we aim to encourage families to carry on their Christian learning at home through reading, praying or taking up a family activity.

We have good support from individuals who 'buy into' the Messy Church concept. These vary in age and come from each of our Partnership churches. We are grateful for all the effort so many people put into each session and know that like all groups Messy Church is people-dependent, in the kitchen, manning the many

School and College Links

New College

The New College Chaplaincy is a Local Ecumenical Partnership, and, like our Church Partnership, is sponsored by Swindon Churches Together. It is part of Student Services, staffed by local Volunteers who support Students and Staff of all faiths and none, and contribute to the very busy College life.

Two active Christian Union Groups have continued, plus a Staff Prayer Group. The Chaplaincy hosted a well attended Lecture Series at the College arranged by Swindon Churches Together, under the title 'Eye of the Needle'. Special events were held for Holocaust Memorial Day, Armistice Day, and Christmas, plus Flame FM Radio, a visit from the Roughshod Theatre Company, and fund raisers for Christian Aid and for Mediterranean Refugees.

Ed has now retired from the role of Team Leader after 10 years at the College. He says 'It has been good to be an active part of the College - Engaging Younger Generations'. An external review of the Chaplaincy for SCT is taking place early in 2017, which will help to inform the way forward.

Oliver Tomkins CofE

Both Infants and Junior Schools have now achieved "good" ratings from Ofsted.

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 have various legal responsibilities and duties. During the year we appointed two further foundation governors, but could still use further expertise. Rahel Dams is chair of health and safety, Clive is chair of RE and worship and vice chair of the governing body. Ben Fleckney was elected chair this year.

Safeguarding

We have 83 (up slightly) DBS-checked volunteers working regularly or occasionally with those who may need safeguarding. We have made significant progress this year to regularly refresh everyone's training, though there is more to do. We have also managed to sort out the new process of applying online for checks to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

We have had no safeguarding issues of any concern this year.

Areas of focus for 2016

Discipleship focus

- Develop teaching themes that can be used across our churches in services and possibly home groups
- Regular times of prayer for one another within the Partnership and a commitment to blessing one another's work.

Mission focus

- Ensure that all churches take responsibility for enabling the Youth work groups, Messy Church and Primary School outreach events to be properly staffed and supported.
- Make a financial appeal for a specific project within our youth or children's work

We report on these focus areas, here.

2016 Focus - Develop teaching themes

One of the challenges of any partnership, be it church or secular, is how you share resource, and how you progress in a similar direction together whilst still retaining the individuality of each part of that partnership. How do you retain that important element of being together and one-ness on “the journey”, which in our case is our “walk” with God and with each other, yet each still able to express their unique characteristics, their individuality, and for want of a better word, “style”? How do you ensure that worship brings us closer to God both individually and as a community? For us, as the Partnership of the churches of St. Mary's, Toothill, Westlea and Holy Trinity, with our many similarities and differences, this has been a challenge that we have worked to embrace.

One of the Partnership goals of 2016 was to develop teaching themes that can be used across our churches in services and potentially in home groups. This has partly been achieved by developing liturgy for specific church seasons that can be used in whole or in part by the individual churches. This means that during Lent or Advent, whilst worshipping God in different locations we retain a shared worship and partnership through the use of the same liturgy and themes. Whilst it is always possible to use the Anglican lectionary to give pattern to the year, this is not to everyone's culture, and whilst a very useful guide and tool, it is good to look beyond that at resources that have been pulled together by people within the Partnership based on a specific theme or themes that may have more relevance to us. We have also dedicated one month – October – to a shared theme to be used each Sunday, and culminating in a shared Partnership service. This was done in 2015 for the first time, and continued in 2016, this time using the life of Moses and God's relationship with His chosen people as he led them from captivity to freedom and a land of their own. The material developed gives good

pupils appreciated the opportunity to have a time of peace and reflection. In the summer we had a marvellous 'Time Travellers' Activity day with 36 children exploring the history of St Marys through making beeswax candles, designing stained glass windows, creating their own heraldry and playing games in the Walled Garden. Shaw, St Marys and Toothill Church have all welcomed classes from their local schools to learn about the Church, our new worksheets have worked well to help the children explore and understand Christian worship. At HTS the children loved watching the video of Lindsey being baptised and the video prompted lots of interesting questions.

The Flower and Music Festival provided a fabulous opportunity to spend time in our schools supporting them with their display creations. The Reception children from Peatmoor loved visiting St Marys in their best clothes for a pretend Wedding and Baptism. On the Saturday of the Festival Brook Field Singers, recorder players and pianists brought music to the Church. The many weeks of preparation and rehearsals came together in one glorious event for the whole community.

Eggciting Easter for KS1 was a fun package to prepare and to share, adults and children alike enjoyed the creative activities. The Easter Trail for KS 2 used photographs of the local area to place the Easter story in the 'here and now' for the children. Feedback from the children and staff was incredibly positive about these new experiences. The Advent Trail encouraged the children to use all their senses to explore the Christmas Story, walking on the stones, tasting Bethlehem and smelling frankincense were just a few of the highlights.

Our activity days and Nativity Workshop have been extremely well attended by non-church children and their families. These days were superb opportunities to develop long term relationships with the families.

This year 40 unique and special volunteers have supported one or more schools work activities. It has been wonderful to see people develop their confidence communicating with the children and exploring new skills.

Attending the Opening Service at the Walled Garden of Remembrance with Brookfield and Westlea Singers was a real honour. The children showed great respect and they sang their little hearts out. The staff and parents all talked about the privilege of being involved in such an event.

2016 has offered us a great many opportunities to share our faith in schools. Relationships have continued to flourish across all our schools. Our range of resources and experiences for schools has developed and grown. Mary, Claire and I have continued to meet regularly for support, sharing of ideas and joint planning to enable us to serve our community of children, young people and their families in unity.

Claire, Mary Poole and Gayle Bryon continued to meet together to pray about and discuss children's' and youth work in the partnership, supporting one another in our work.

Outcomes and aims for the year ahead

Emerge project has continued to fulfil its 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.

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 need to increase our volunteer team by 2 regular members. Current Volunteer ages range from 21-70+ so age is no barrier!

Primary Schools work

2016 has been a year of Encounters for everyone involved in our Partnership School's Work: we have encountered God with curious children, inspirational teachers, caring parents, and enthusiastic volunteers. We have discovered new depths to our own faith as we have shared our faith with others in creative and educational ways.

Christian values, bible stories and Festivals have been shared in 32 acts of Collective Worship across our Primary Schools reaching over 2,000 children and each one has been a blessing.

The planning and sharing of lessons with teachers and children has been challenging and immensely rewarding. The Prayer Workshop was a delight in each of the three schools in which we delivered it this year. The children completely emerged themselves in the activities and gained a deeper insight into why people of faith pray. All of the schools appreciated these sessions and commented on the superb resources and adult support available to the children. In the reception class in Peatmoor school we enjoyed a wonderful morning learning about the Feeding of the 5,000 and Communion. The session was written up for the Diocese Making RE Matter for which the school gained a Certificate.

The Pilgrimage Session for Year 6 was a meaningful journey in a special place, holiness was found on a playground walking on a dust sheet labyrinth. All the

scope for individual freedom in how that material is used, yet ensures continuity and shared worship across the four churches, and emphasises the feeling of community and "family". It also means that worship leaders have common material to draw from, and if they are leading worship at a different Partnership church than their own, there will be a continuity and the opportunity to develop and build on what has gone before.

How well has this worked? Overall, having common themes and liturgy has helped to build that important sense of community worship and spirit across the four churches, and it has been interesting to see how the material has been interpreted and used. It has challenged both those who have developed the material and also the worship leaders in how they use it. There is always the danger of people feeling "forced" into themes, but this is never the intention when planning worship and praise of God. The success of any partnership wide theme is ensuring that the material is used in the spirit to which it was prepared, to build up our worship and understanding and praise of God, to share fellowship with one another, yet retaining the individual character of each church. I believe we are getting better at embracing shared themes, but there is still work to be done! Remember that underlying this really is two common themes that will never go away – worship and love of God, and love and care for each other.

2016 Focus – Regular prayer times

Although prayers take place in small groups across the partnership. We have been unable to work out a regular practice of praying for each other in our acts of worship. Some Churches are more in the practise of doing so. However, we have become aware that this goal has not been achieved as well as it ought.

To aid in this practice which we hope will be ongoing, we will be reviewing how we own this commitment by looking at how we communicate our aims, objective's and over all vision in 2017.

2016 Focus – Enabling outreach

Our Youth work groups - the Emerge project groups, Messy Church and Primary School outreach work are supported by enthusiastic and committed teams of volunteers. The level of support and size of the teams varies across our mission activities. Last year we set this as an area of particular focus because we knew sustaining our efforts would be difficult, it may be that we were trying to spread ourselves too thinly and achieve too much. We have since seen increased pressure on these teams and have unfortunately this year reached a crisis point with our Remix youth club and had to stop this activity as it was not wise to continue with an overstretched team.

Our children's and youth work is extremely valuable to us and we have been concerned that we had noticed a pattern of reducing volunteer numbers. It is difficult to precisely ascertain why this had occurred, except we are aware that people are working more, everyone is feeling increasingly time pressured and we are an aging volunteer base. It is good to note that although this is a trend we have witnessed there are signs of new growth and involvement.

We have asked an external reviewer to look at our youth and children's work at this time of change to enable us develop further growth.

This review will consider :

- How to direct the resources of our partnership in our local youth and children's work.
- How to support our existing workers.
- How to grow our volunteer teams numerically through encouragement and motivation inspired by a clear vision of Gods across the Partnership.
- How to increase a sense of ownership of children's and youth work by our local congregations through increased communication and engagement.

2016 Focus - Financial appeal

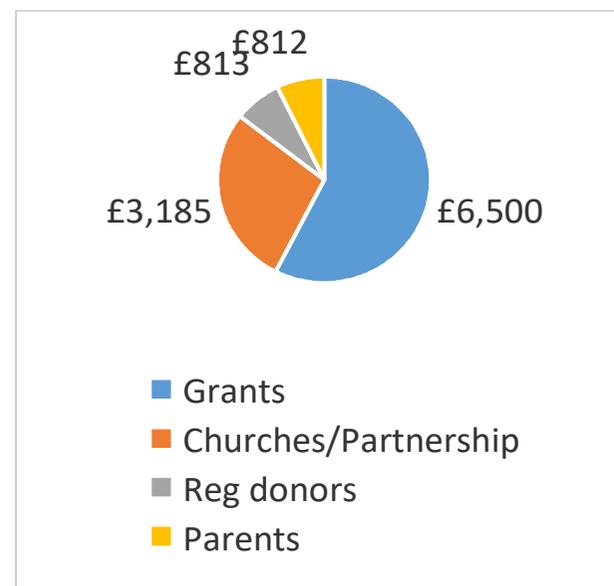
During the year the PC decided to establish a link with a School in Uganda, with help from Rev Sally Robertson the Deanery-Uganda link. Our fundraising for them began at our advent service.

Changes being proposed by the Diocese of Bristol for calculating our contribution towards ministry costs, meant other specific ventures did not proceed.

Nativity & Bible readings; carols; ending with the children's reflections on 'what it would be like to be a refugee', followed by a moving video from contemporary 'real life' refugees who attend the 'Harbour Project' in Swindon. Our audience were encouraged to write their name and a prayer or hope for 2017 on a paper chain which were linked with that made by refugees at the Harbour Centre. We raised £187.50 for the work of the Harbour Centre through tickets sold and through stalls after the show. It was lovely to welcome all the families of the children plus a good number from our churches, which resulted in a pretty full church and a lovely community feel.

Future of emerge: Since Christmas I have been busy with various exploratory meetings and activities; seeking God's path for how we can continue the work of youth outreach in different ways since the demise of Remix last term. So far, I have had good discussions with Dave Clarke, Schools and Youth work Manager, Swindon Youth for Christ and with members of the Chaplaincy team at New College. I have begun to work alongside the SYFC team in Lydiard Park Academy, supporting the CU, running PSHE lessons on sex and relationships and on the dangers of pornography. We are considering running a West Swindon-based outreach session with their mobile youth bus.

Finance



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

Working with the rest of the Partnership

We met as a partnership on Tuesday evenings during Lent for shared study on “The Lord’s Prayer”, and preparation for Easter

Emerge Youth work

During the year we engaged with 40 different young people aged 10-18 through the Monday, Tuesday and Saturday youth groups at Shaw – Remix (27) Saturday special needs club (11) and Monday afterschool club (7) with 5 of those on Mondays also attending Saturdays.

Staffing: Claire continued as Project Manager (12.5hrs pw)

Volunteers: Claire was supported by a team of 4 volunteers in Remix and 4 volunteers with the special needs groups, the majority from within the partnership; 2 are contacts from outside with considerable experience and skills in children’s and youth work.

Student: One young lady continued working with us on Mondays and Saturdays finishing her DOE silver award and deciding to stay on to take the gold award.

Project News: The year started well with good numbers of young people and adequate volunteer numbers across all groups but at the start of the summer term we lost two of our regular Remix volunteers; we were unable to continue running the group in the Autumn term 2016. The partnership council requested a review to see how we might either employ more volunteers or develop a new group which could run on limited resources. The review reported that the group was still very much in demand but there was no realistic way of re-starting this group or another group as we did not have a strong enough response to the request for more volunteers.

Group news: The Monday (weekly) and Saturday (monthly) groups for our young people with special needs have continued regularly throughout the year with 3 new referrals from ‘Aiming Hi’ (SBC short breaks team). It’s been great to see all the children develop in confidence, social and life skills, talents and spiritual awareness. In the Autumn we watched a very powerful Tearfund video and saw the effects of global warming on the harvest in Africa; we decided to participate as a group in Tearfund’s ‘Big Bake’ campaign and raised over £100 – a lovely occasion where we welcomed the families of our children plus some guests from our churches – 25 in all. In Advent we enjoyed learning about the Nativity and participated in Gayle’s advent trail in church.

The Saturday Club enjoyed the usual mix of drama, dance and music alongside cookery, crafts, games and discussions. We finished the Autumn term on a really high note with an excellent end of year show led by the young people from Monday and Saturday groups, focussing on the theme of refugees. This included drama and songs from the musical ‘Joseph’; animated music and video of the

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

	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
St Mary’s	66	73	75	76	74	70	59	73	69	76
Holy Trinity	28	28	33	31	36	42	38	40	42	37
Toothill	35	34	36	32	39	42	40	39	37	35
Westlea	31	27	30	31	26	26	27	28	25	25
Total	160	162	174	170	175	180	164	180	173	173

(Historic figures 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 Lay Ministers and our extensive team of locally trained lay people 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 Free-Church styles.

Messy Church is a missionary congregation aimed at families with young children. It is lay-led and resourced from the other “Sunday morning” churches.

Toothill have been hosting a fortnightly worship meeting on Wednesdays mornings. This is well supported. In the autumn we started meeting for Morning prayer on Fridays at HTS.

Denominationally Appointed Ministers	
Rev Capt. Clive Deverell	CofE Team Minister Authorised to Serve as Methodist
Rev Trevor Day	CofE Assistant 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 Supernumerary) - pastoral training
Mrs Rachel Dowling	Methodist Lay Preacher
Mr Mark Dowling	Methodist Lay Preacher
Mr David Hoar	URC Lay Preacher

We have 4 people attending the Exploring Christianity course, with a view to perhaps becoming candidates for Licensed Lay Ministry in the Church of England. We have two people in training to become Lay Preachers in the Methodist Circuit.

Locally Appointed Ministers		
Rev Mike Dilly	Congregational Minister, local pastor at Westlea	
Mrs Claire Camm	Youth Work Manager	
Mrs Gayle Bryon	Schools worker	
Mrs Mary Poole	Messy Church Leader	
Heather Benn	Jacqueline Kirwan	Lay worship leaders
Gayle Bryon	Angela Mak	
Ian Bryon	Ed Poole	
Janet Clarke	Mary Poole	
Wendy Deverell	Mark Taylor	
Sue Green	Pat Watson	
Stephen Kershaw	Sarah Wilmott	

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	

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

Usual Weekly Attendance

	2016		2015		2014		2013		2012		2011		2010	
	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child
St Mary's	57	9	59	12	72	12	69	12	85	12	71	15	46	6
Holy Trinity	34	8	36	8	36	16	27	3	25	5	26	5	28	6
Toothill	29	9	25	5	27	5	28	4	32	7	31	5	29	7
Westlea	26	6	24	7	25	9	23	9	24	10	23	11	22	12
Total	146	32	142	31	160	42	147	28	166	34	151	36	132	31

Figures adjusted to include Messy Church other non-weekly services etc

Joint Partnership Worship

Several joint Services were organised in 2016:

- 31 January Covenant Service at Toothill with Rev Dr John Emmett
- 10 February Ash Wednesday at Toothill
- 24 March Maundy Thursday at HTS
- 25 March Good Friday morning at Toothill
- 25 March Good Friday afternoon at Westlea
- 25 March Good Friday evening Tenebrae at St Mary's
- 27 March Easter Sunrise at St Mary's
- 10 April at HTS, included Partnership AGM
- 29 May at Westlea with dedication and a BBQ
- 12 June the Queen's birthday celebration at Toothill
- 31 July Partnership service at Toothill
- All August Sunday services were shared
- 24 Sept Harvest Supper evening at Toothill
- 30 October Party in Partnership at HTS
- 6 November Memorial service at St Mary's
- 27 November Advent service at HTS
- 18 December Nativity workshop "Descendant", and service at HTS

Our joint Partnership Prayer and Praise service continues, 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. Toothill Church have organised and hosted midweek services at 11:30 am on Wednesdays, every 2 weeks. These are open to all.