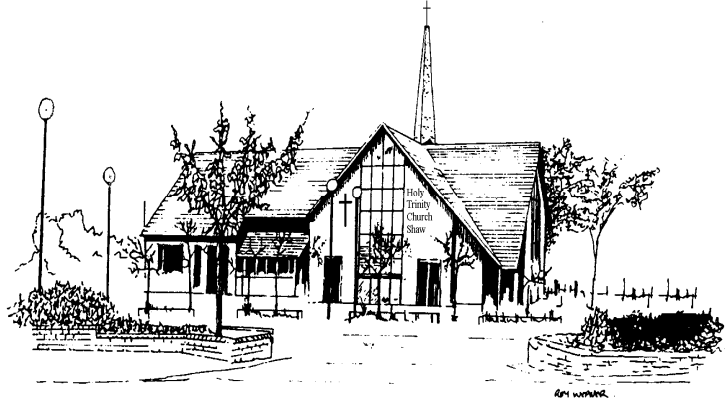


Holy Trinity Church, Shaw

In the West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze Church
Partnership



Annual Report and Accounts for the year to 31st December 2023

**Annual General Meeting
11.30am Sunday 3rd March 2024**

Holy Trinity Shaw and St Mary's Annual Report:

In a year, in which King Charles the third had his coronation, we recall the important role that the Church had on that day and the special part that the anointing had. It was a real privilege for both Churches to share in that joy and our prayers continue to be with him and his family.

Sincere thanks firstly, need to go to Linda, Wendy, Pat and Jacqueline as Wardens, and Pauline as Deputy Warden and Verger at St Mary's, the members of the DCC's and for all those like Angela, Janet, Ian and Lyn, who have ensured communications between the various aspects of the daily life of the church, have continued without disruption.

My particular thanks to those who lead Messy Church, Open the Book, especially Heather Benn, she inspires and encourages so many. Both Churches, have played their part in supporting "Open the book" and "Messy Church" we have sustained and continued with those activities that originated from ourselves, Spotlight and Day group for Jesus, and my thanks to those who lead them.

My thanks to, Trevor, Lis, Angela, Peter Rogers and all who have led services over the past year, in both churches.

We do need to acknowledge, in 2023, Andy Bissex has continued on his ordination training and left to go on extended placement. We have officially welcomed Robert Nicholas as an LLM, it was great that so many went to Bristol for his licensing. All four Wardens began Exploring Christianity, and we welcomed Nitin Shinde an Ordinand from Christ Church who is with us till the summer of 2025.

We have continued to be blessed by Rev Mark Tidey and on an extended placement Rev Som Okonwero, although both have been more focused at Toothill.

I would also like specific thanks to go to the futures group at St Mary's, Robert Bednarski, Michael Grey and Ann Hutchison who with myself build on the work of Paul Gardner and the St Mary's Conservation Project Board.

To Nick and Mary Martin and Steve Kershaw's for being our Treasurer's, Steve Kershaw and Vanessa Parfitt for being our Gift Aid officers.

I am extremely grateful to Ann Hutchison who co-ordinates volunteers at St Mary's, to Rebecca Kershaw for her management of not only safeguarding at Holy Trinity Shaw but also lettings management. My thanks also to Jacqueline who has been led Safeguarding and Pastoral Care at St Mary's.

I would like give thanks for the passion at HTS as we seek to care for the environment, our desire to make HTS sustainable having now installed Solar Panels, and the expansion of the number of sessions of "Welcome space" it is an important part of our responsibilities towards the planet and the people we serve. To see the numbers in welcome space and its growth is a real blessing.

My thanks to my family especially in a year where my own personal circumstances changed considerably.

Grief has been tangible for myself, and several others, in 2023, we mourn the loss particularly of Val Hemmens, Mavis McLaughlin and Joan Rumming each of them brought so much to the Churches.

We give thanks for their lives and continued inspiration.

We face a new beginning from the summer of 2024. As we become Church of England only, I remind us all of the breadth, we already have, I am sure you will agree, we must endeavour to retain, that difference whilst also giving space for others outside the Church of England like Mark Taylor to preach. An ethos we will make every effort to enshrine in the future.

Our efforts must be focused on how are we going to build the Kingdom of God in West Swindon, in so doing we will need to work together more, understand each other more.

God is doing something, look at the vocational growth, look at the changes in demographics, in our congregations. There is more to be done, let us pray, study and reach out, to our communities together.

Rev Capt Clive Deverell. Vicar of West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze

Church Wardens' Report 2023 – 2024

Our year started with the news of the Partnership dissolving and what would this bring.....

Well, we have grown. We have new members not only in our congregation but also in our leadership team. Quite a few of us attended Bristol Cathedral last October to witness Bob become an LLM. Linda stepped up to the challenge and became our new Church Warden..... double trouble now there's two of us.

Sadly Val, our good friend and one of the longest serving members, also our organist for over 36yrs, lost her battle to illness. We as a Church were with her to the very end.

Mavis, good friend and youth worker, also lost her battle to illness. What a send off we gave her.

We have a new King, Charles was crowned last May. Another new beginning.

Linda and I had both Triennial and Quinquennial reviews as well as a DAC visit. People have been very busy within the building, restraining windows, painting rooms, gardening, Solar Panels (at long last), new Sign (grateful thanks to Ivan). OTB and Messy Church have new storage rooms along with resource's for the new Schools Worker as and when they come on board, Guiding is all in one cupboard. Welcome Space has gone from the few to the many, with crafts, knitting and a second session on Wednesdays.

As mentioned earlier our membership has grown, attendance is really good – we even beat St Mary's , not that we are competing!

The Partnership, we now know which path we will take, St Mary's will be joining us on this journey too. Toothill have chosen a different path and will become Methodist, which will happen at the end of August this year. Westlea, our prayers are with them as they make their decision at their AGM. We will continue to maintain our ecumenical grounding on our way. Yes there will be change, but nothing too obvious.

Our Summer social was so well attended we held it here at HTS. Along with Ivan's 99th Birthday celebration, curry, balloons and great fellowship! What will we do for the next one!

Our Christmas services were well attended, our advent Crown was traditionally dressed. Messy Church hosted the Christingle service and we had a lovely Carols by Candlelight too. But we can't leave out the Carols at the Pub! With our very own Pub Singer (Bob) at the Village Inn.

OTB now spread the Lords word from here to our local primary schools.

DG4J and Messy Church both meet here regularly, along with the Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers.

We've even become a police station for a day, after West Station was broken into. Add to that West Swindon Parish Council have held 2 meetings here.

We truly are becoming a centre for our community.

Finally, Linda and I would like to EVERYONE for their valued support, participation and enthusiasm in helping to achieve what we have all done!

BUT hold the back page..... Just in

Congratulations to REV. Canon Capt. Clive Deverell

Safeguarding report 2023 for Holy Trinity Church Shaw Church, Swindon.

We have had no issues with safeguarding this last year.

At the end of 2023 we have talked about the process of moving all of Shaw's safeguarding administration from the partnership of West Swindon and Lydiard Tregoze to Shaw Church.

There has been an ongoing updating of DBS's and training as to when they have become out of date.

We have not had any new recruitments this year, but there is just one in progress.

Rebecca Kershaw
(Assistant safeguarding co-ordinator)

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2023

2023 was an interesting year, and as always things never come out as expected. Our income was up on what was expected, but so was our outgoings. But in a nutshell we ended up better off than expected, but considerably negative overall, due entirely to the solar panels

However to give the highlights:-

- We have paid for the solar panels (£25859) and we received a loan from the partnership of £15859
- Our booking secretary has been working hard and our commercial rents have increased from £11600 to £17600, although this was in part due to receiving some unpaid back rents of £2156.75
- Planned giving was up slightly thanks to a few new members and their generosity
- Envelopes are down as most people do STO now, plus we have lost people who used to give this way—it is likely this will be nil in 2024
- The increase in Publicity/ Training was mainly down to LLM courses
- We have yet to give our 10% for either 2022 or 2023—previously the charities we had given to were BMS, Filling Station and SYC. It has only just been agreed that these will continue and we have been awaiting account details before paying
- Rubbish disposal seems high but we paid promptly and are slightly ahead of the game
- Cleaning costs were down but this was due to Pre School leaving and us reducing the cleaning from 3 days to 2 days.
- Church rents were up as the Guides/ Brownies / Rainbows have increased their hours from the previous year
- Water was down as historically they had taken estimates which were over pessimistic so at one stage we had a credit balance
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Challenges for 2024:-

- 10% giving for 2022 has been made in Jan 2024, 2023 giving will be paid once we have received our funds from Historic churches
- We have no idea how much the solar panels will positively help our electricity costs
- Cleaning charges continue to increase because of the National Living wage—however it should be noted we have been very pleased with the present cleaners and there have been little to no complaints in 2023 around cleanliness
- Expecting Council charges / BIFFA to increase above inflation rates

- We are expecting the Partnership Council to ask us to repay the loan of £15859 if possible before the Partnership dissolves on the 31st August—this should be possible
- To try and get a balanced balance sheet we will need, if possible, to keep our maintenance costs down to £2k (£6953 in 2023). There have been exceptional items last year such as re doing the lights at £3186. Also we have been very fortunate with Wendy and David, Rebecca and Bob doing work either for free or at greatly reduced cost to us.
- By **FAR** the biggest possible change next year would be if we lost PSDA as a rental—they are looking at the possibility of purchasing their own premises—if this did happen then DRASTIC action would need to be taken, what actions would be down to the Trustees I believe.
- We may look to improve our sound system so to improve worship
- The Church of England may wish to look at us increasing our giving to them—personally I do not believe this to be feasible, but we may receive a request

Actions taken:-

- We will review our finances monthly to ensure we can always have funds to pay our bills for a 3 month period.
- Wendy is continuing to look at opportunities to apply for grants
- We continue to maximise our church rentals
- We will look to the membership via requests and gift days to cover any large specific outgoings
- We would always suggest people review their giving within their affordability

Payment of the cost of the solar panels has meant that the previously healthy general fund is now down to as low as we would like - however it was what was expected when the decision was made and is a clear example of us stepping out in faith.

So assuming that we always have enough funds to cover 3 months of our outgoings then I see no reason why we should stop stepping out in faith--but I would not say no to a large donation!!

I have also put the figures in the accounts past Sue Green who is looking at things going forward for the partnership / remaining churches, and if any of you are brave enough to question Sue then

God Bless and thank you all

Steve

Schools Work, March 2024

Holy Trinity Shaw is linked with Brookfield and Shaw Ridge Primary Schools.

OTB continue to provide regular support and go into Brookfield school to lead assemblies, and more recently at Shaw Ridge School. A huge thank you to Heather and all the volunteers from HTS for their time, energy and commitment.

May 23 Children from Brookfield school foundation year came to HTS for a session on “church as a special place.” We talked about worship, what different things mean to us in the church, and the children moved around stations to draw objects and ask/answer questions.

September 23 Angela led a session in Brookfield school for foundation year on infant baptism.

Late September 23 Angela led harvest festival services for KS1 and KS2 children at Brookfield school. Brookfield school also used our building for their annual Christmas Carol service with parents.

Easter 24 (upcoming) we will be running an Easter Experience at HTS on both 25th, 26th and 27th march to Brookfield, Shaw Ridge, Westlea and Tregoze schools. Children will also be donated an Easter storybook and small Easter egg.

Review comments: Brookfield school leadership and their RE co-ordinator are very open to talks about Christianity and church. Good to continue to grow this relationship. Can we increase our promotion of Messy Church with the school?

Angela: it would be better if I had a helper I could go into school with – it can be difficult going in alone as the schools are understandably short of people to help carry stuff in, set up/pack down. I have found it stressful sometimes, setting up and getting the tech to work etc, in the very tight time frame that I am allocated for assemblies or workshops.