

Holy Trinity Church Southwell



PAGM Reports 2024/25

Vicar's Foreword

'I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.' - Philippians 1:3-5



Three and a half months into a first incumbency, and one month into parenthood I have noticed something that may seem incredibly obvious: it can be very easy to forget the Biblical imperative of gratitude that Paul sets out most excellently in his letter to the church in Phillipi. Life becomes busy, tiring, and task focused all too easily in our personal lives and indeed can be a great trap for our church life too. We can be good at dashing to the next event and not allowing space for gratitude and reflection. So let me start here with words of gratitude:

Firstly, I want to express my deep thanks to the whole fellowship at Holy Trinity for your welcome to me, Ella, and Zachariah over these first few months. Words of kindness, practical help, and a welcome that has made us feel at home already has been a cause of rejoicing for us personally.

I also want to express my deep thankfulness to the faithfulness of the church's lay leadership and everyone who volunteers as part of the ministries listed in the following reports. For a church to weather an interregnum is no small feat and Holy Trinity has done so with a creativity and commitment that I am truly grateful for. To everyone who has poured out so much since the last PAGM, I thank my God for you.

As you read through this booklet, I want to encourage you to allow yourself to take a moment to pause and do as Paul did: thank God as you remember. I look forward to discerning together what God has in store for Trinity over the next twelve months as we partner together in the work of the gospel.

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"
Isaiah 43:18-19
Jon Morley

Wardens Report

We spent the whole of 2024 in vacancy. However, with the help of numerous people, either ordained or lay ministers, we managed to continue to provide our full service pattern for Sundays. The wardens are very grateful to all who stepped in to help.

At the last PAGM Helen Geeson stepped down as warden and Ian Baird-Smith took over the role. We are very grateful for Helen's tireless work over the last few years most of which went unseen by the majority of the congregation.

The fabric of the church building and churchyards continues to be monitored and there have been improvements made to the church building and in the graveyards. Some interior paintwork has been repaired along with modifications to the toilet facilities along with other things including replacement of the old gas cooker with a new all electric cooker which provides much safer cooking. We lost a large tree from the Millennium Churchyard during the August storm and had to have most of the remaining trunks removed. However, the work we have done over the year has strengthened our relationships with our neighbours who were very thankful that we acted swiftly.

Finally, Trevor Gatie and Anthony Hustwayte agreed to be Deputy Wardens and are taking on numerous roles for us. Many thanks to them and to everyone who helps in the running of the church as we continue to strive to be a thriving Parish Church for our community and represent God's love for all.

Chris Stead and Ian Baird-Smith, Wardens



Julie Barker, Ian Bunting, Marian Welham & Peter Harris have been the main representatives for Trinity in the last year, with Carolyn James having taken over from Marian as secretary. A huge thank you to you all for being part of this important role.

It has been an exciting and busy time for Churches Together in Southwell with unity of purpose and an visible presence in the community as has not been seen in several years. There have been market stalls at key times of year, prayer for the community and church unity, corporate worship such as the Week of Prayer for Christian unity, the Lent course, an Easter holiday club organised by Collaborate (subgroup of children & young peoples' leaders) and prayer support for schools & Brackenhurst. We are also linked closely to CMJ (The Church's Ministry Among Jewish People) based near Kirklington).

The most exciting & challenging initiative to date is the Pentecost prayer 'Thy Kingdom Come' 24-7 prayer space, called 'The Lighthouse', running from 29th May - 8th June. It is based at The Wheatsheaf pub and will culminate in an ecumenical service of celebration on Pentecost, to thank God for all that He is doing in our town and beyond. Please dedicate some time in your diaries to spend praying for His Spirit to move in power in the hearts of the people in this town who don't yet know him. Peter May is the person to help you if anyone needs help to book slots on the online portal.

Finally, the CTiS Open Breakfast & Forum occurs bimonthly on a Saturday morning, hosted by member churches in rotation, and is advertised in the church notices. Anyone can attend and it would be lovely if you wanted to come and see.

Julie Barker — www.southwellchurchestogether.org.uk

Connections



During the last year we have seen a number of new people coming to Connections as well as a consistent core of regulars, many of whom repeat how much their visits mean to them.

Our vision is to be recognised as a place of welcome for anyone who is looking for fellowship and to be known for our Christian love for our guests. The steady core of guests shows that they do appreciate what we provide. The link with Notts CC Social services, Claire Hogan, has proved very popular and useful for many guests. The visits by the children from Holy Trinity Infant School have continued and been well received by the Connections guests.

Over the next year we want to develop the Christian input through initiatives like a 'Thought for the Day' or similar and to introduce occasional speakers.

The Bible study group is a steady regular feature and Living with Loss has provided a valuable resource on alternate weeks.

We would welcome more people to help out with Connections. We thank especially our cooks, Richard and Sally, Chris, Vicky and John. Also thanks to the regular helpers who give the coffees, talk to the guests and clear up afterwards.

Ian & Shelagh Baird-Smith, Co-ordinators

Moments

Moments meets on the last Wednesday of the month 10-12.00. Refreshments are provided and a light lunch (optional) between 12 and 1.00pm.



Our aim is to stimulate the mind and memory, with guest speakers, quizzes, puzzles and other activities. Everyone is welcome and enjoys the friendly, loving atmosphere, where they can feel safe and cared for as well as having fun. We have had some excellent speakers, e.g. Bee keepers, Twitchers, Antiques and memorable sing-alongs. We are very blessed to have Claire, the NCC Local Area Co-ordinator, for support in the community, and she has helped a number of our members in different ways.

Our goal for the future is to bring more people into our happy, relaxed atmosphere where they can feel comfortable and valued, and to encourage them to chat to us and to each other. We hope that they will feel the love of God shining through us.

Ann Stafford, Co-ordinator

Diocesan & Deanery Synods

Peter Harris sits on the Diocesan Synod from the Deanery Synod. As a member he also sits on the Bishop's Council and was re-elected last year to the Diocesan Board of Education.

We have no Area Dean at present but our Lay Chair is Michael Wilson of St Giles, Balderton. We usually meet in person, but we are able to have hybrid meetings that reduces the travel - but with a consequential reduction in the inter-personal elements. Some of the meetings have been held in churches with

traditional pews - something that does preclude full engagement.

Parish share update and Deanery Allocation for 2025/6 has taken up our time and I would like to add my huge 'well done' for the contributions made in 2024/5 with 96.1% from the Newark and Southwell Deanery for the Share HTS gave 100% of the requested contribution Please see 'How the Deanery spend the Parish Share' https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HDXm1nOricsKCBTNBG1ymaOzGAA1F_xP/view

The Parish Refresh is available and the PCC are considering our next steps. However, one of the main issues that I will be pursuing is the relationship between our school and churches. I regard school as church - especially in Church Schools of which we have four in our town. We are looking to support much more integration between the churches and schools and their families so that we are encouraging the journey to faith in all our people. The Director of Diocesan Education Nigel Frith proposed '20 Things That We Could Do To Help Our Schools' and we should reflect how many more of these we could do.

Peter is also one of the five elected lay members of the General Synod from the Diocese. Information on the most recent Synod is available at <https://southwell.anglican.org/diocesan-synod-summary-12-october-2024/> I am happy to be contacted for any further information or to lobby me at Church or at home!

Peter Harris , Deanery & Diocesan Synod Rep.

Report from General Synod February 2025

Synod is, necessarily, a complex and parliamentary process. It is not easy to negotiate but fairly well understood. Ian Boothroyd posed four questions and an amendment [not supported] and Peter Harris submitted two speakers cards but was not called. The tearoom was busy, from 08h00 to the end of the days -around 19h00 - with discussion on the new Archbishop of Canterbury, as well as other issues of the day! Days start with collective worship and there are a number of fringe meetings at lunch time and in the evenings

Safeguarding - repenting on past failures and redoubling efforts to implement good practice. However the recommended completely independent process and staffing [option 4] was rejected. The Church will be moving towards greater independence with work on the 'legal and practical requirements' of this [option 4], but endorsing option 3 [with Diocesan staffing and oversight] in the meanwhile.

Progress on Racial Justice was discussed with an affirmation that further effort needs to be made to embed racial justice in the life and practice of the church. The Diocese and Churches were asked to take special notice of this.

Guests from Lutheran Church of Estonia and the Anglican Church of Canada spoke well and passionately of how the Church of England provides support and succour to other world Christians.

Working Class Ministry, motion proposed by Rev Alex Frost from Blackburn, was debated, recognising both the strengths of working class people in the Church both clergy and lay and the difficulties that they face in our churches. The church will look at a strategy to support working class people in their vocations.

A report on the 'Living in Love and Faith' discussions was given by Bishop Martin of Leicester. It is intended that proposals will be taken to the July Synod.

Clergy Conduct Measure made changes in how clergy for the Royal Peculiars are brought into line with those for Dioceses. It received final approval from Synod and the Measure will now be considered in Parliament.

Registrar and Chancellor's fees were set; there were considerable differences between Dioceses, with Southwell and Nottingham's being mid range.

'Growing younger and more diverse' was a motion from Kenson Li - one of the youngest members of Synod - looked to support 18-25 year olds in the church with 3-5 young people being co-opted to Synod.

Changes to the Crown Nominations and Vacancy in See Committees will mean that any one particular church/cathedral can only have one representative on Committee. These Committees are the ones that decides on two names for a new Bishop to be proposed to the Prime Minister. A requirement that at least one clergy and one lay representative elected from the Vacancy in See Committee to the Crown Nominations Commission must be female was successfully proposed by the Bishop of London. There was an amendment to stop this and Bishop Sarah was visibly upset by the opposition to this, something that got national attention.

There were some alterations to the Mission and Pastoral Measure. This has been a big job although it has now gone to the revision stage and will come back with the Regulations. The Measure itself is quite controversial with changes to suspensions of presentation, the "fallow" proposal, and simplifying church buildings closures amongst other things. the latter will come back for adoption to Synod later this year.

The 'Distribution of Funds' was not debated due to the time constraint and the call to support clergy stipends and supporting parish ministry deferred - although the Church is required to 'pay particular regard' to supporting parish ministry as a successful amendment by Marcus Walker to the Governance Measure. Future dates for 2027-2029 were also deferred as Synod ran out of time but will be considered in July

Peter Harris, Newark Deanery

Holy Trinity Infant School



The school continues to exhibit excellent teaching and an all-pervasive Christian ethos, currently waiting for the Ofsted inspection but having regular check ups by Mitre and always achieving a very positive review. The governing body is now almost up to a full complement, particularly since Jon has joined as a foundation governor. Each month one class from the school visits Connections and this is greatly appreciated by most of the older people, we continue to look for ways to integrate the children more with the Connections' people. Most weeks one of our leadership team leads Collective Worship in the school on a Wednesday and the interactions are enjoyed by all. During the year one teacher left the school and was replaced by a new, male, teacher and he seems to be fitting in well.

Looking forward, we aim to develop the link which has been made with Kiwafu Primary school in Uganda to create understanding of the different cultures across the two schools. We continue to have four members of the church on the governing body.

Ian Baird-Smith, Chair of Governors



We took over the role of co-ordinating Home Groups in November 2024. We took over from Holly Halstead and express our thanks to her for her previous co-ordinating roll.

Our Role:

We see our role as helping and encouraging group leaders and directing people looking to join a Home Group to find a group that suits their needs.

We have met all the group leaders either individually or in a group of leaders.

Groups:

We are pleased to report that we have a total membership of 100 individuals spread over 9 Home Groups. There are 8 people who are in more than one group.

Our groups are very varied, some going deeply into the Bible, others more general studies, while some focus more on social activities.

Thanks:

We are very thankful for the dedication of the Home Group leaders in leading studies on a regular basis and for those who host the meetings mostly in homes. Groups tend to meet on a fortnightly basis but flexibly to account for holidays etc. Most Groups follow a set course to study books in the Bible, People in the Bible or a DVD based course such as *The Chosen*.

Our Vision:

To encourage church members to attend a Home Group where they will be welcomed, get to know each other better, share fellowship and encourage one another as we seek to strengthen our love and faith in Jesus.

Finally:

If you are not in a Home Group, please see Anthony or Marjorie and we would love to enable you to join a group.

*Anthony & Marjorie Hustwayte,
Home Group Co-ordinators*

**Ladies Group**

Ladies Group has continued to meet during the past year with new members joining us, each bringing their own gifts. Among the highlights have been interesting talks (including a well sung sing-song, thanks to Carolyn!), discussions and other group activities.

We aim to give a warm welcome in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, befriending and encouraging both old and new members. In turn, we see folk supporting and encouraging each other with friendships blossoming, creating a space for us all to learn more of God's plan for each one of us – in our homes – our wider families and friends - our church and the Southwell community.

Rosemary Gatie

Men's Breakfast

Men's breakfast has continued to thrive during the last year with numbers attending usually between 20 and 30.



We have had numerous guest speakers from both within Holy Trinity and from other Christian backgrounds and listened to their faith journeys and personal stories about their lives, followed by questions from the floor.

A significant number of those who attend are not from Holy Trinity or are guests of people who are. We would love to build on this number.

We have now established a regular team to help us but, as always, more help would be appreciated, to grow this witness.

Chris Stead and Ian Baird-Smith
Breakfast Team

Mission



Although support for mission has continued through our links with CMS, CPAS and the Lira, Uganda, projects, mission group has met only rarely. There have been good developments within these three mission areas, with Tim and Miranda making good use of their new Place of Springs resource for supporting their mission debriefings. CPAS were, of course, very involved in Jon's recruitment and their support was invaluable. The Lira projects are twofold; UCI (Uganda Christian Institute) used the donations we sent to buy 20 computers for students to use; the donations to Keframa, in addition to Keframa School Build, enabled the building of new accommodation for girl students within the new school site to give them better security. A number of Trinity members sponsor individual students at Keframa High School.

The HT mission fund has continued to build up and a major part of the next year's effort will be to make good use of this resource. Our vision for the future of mission group is to keep up the profile of mission support within Holy Trinity and to grow the reach of the mission fund.

Ian Baird-Smith



"The pastoral team has combined with the older persons ministry team and now includes Suzanne and Phil Dent, Julie Payne, Ann Stafford and Jo MacDonald. Of course we are very pleased that Jon is part of the team.

[Together we try to ensure that the pastoral needs of our Church family are met and that no one has to feel alone when facing difficult times. We work alongside other areas of ministry in the church, such as home groups, Living with Loss, Connections and Moments and, as always, we can only offer support when we are aware of a need.]

It is our hope and prayer that we can walk alongside those who need support while pointing to Him who is our strength and salvation."

Julie Payne

Living with Loss

Meeting every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month in the Stanley Room, the second year of Living with Loss – intended to support those dealing with any sort of bereavement – has continued to provide a safe space for people to share and to talk. It is very helpful that it happens when church is already open for Connections, and people often stay for lunch afterwards. So far it has mainly helped members of the fellowship who have lost loved ones, and typically numbers up to 6.

It was set up two years ago with the aim of helping those who have lost a loved one whose funeral was at Trinity, and for a time it included one or two people in this category. This has not happened over the last year, so the vision moving forwards is to reach more people in the community, men as well as women, as a 'pre-evangelism' initiative. We would also welcome others who might occasionally lead it. We are not trained counsellors; the main requirement is a sensitive, listening ear.

Suzanne & Phil Dent & Marian Welham

ECO CHURCH

As last year, there has been very limited progress towards our goal of attaining Gold Status, mainly due to the additional workload that the vacancy inevitably placed on some of the group members. We did manage to have a Bring & Take event on Sunday 14th July, and it raised £151 for the Farming Community Network, a charity that exists to support those farmers who are under a lot of pressure.



So, moving forwards, these are the goals for getting back on track with our vision to be a church that fully supports caring for God's Creation in proactive ways:

- Augment membership of the group; Resume quarterly meetings

- Focus on the goals for attaining A Rocha's Gold Eco Church Status (for more information see their website – arocha.org.uk)

If this is something that you think God may be calling you to help with, please speak to Ian Baird-Smith, Shelagh Baird-Smith, or Suzanne Dent.

Suzanne Dent



Prayer Ministry

'People of Prayer', vision for Holy Trinity.

It has been a privilege as well as a responsibility to lead on prayer for the church over the last year. I have been very grateful for the help of Peter May for support during the focus on seeking the Lord's intervention during our interregnum period and recruitment process for our new vicar. We thank the Lord for hearing and answering our prayers in a much greater way that we could possibly ask or imagine!

I also thank Suzanne & Shelagh for co-leading the last prayer training session in September, with a focus on intercessory prayer, and to Jon for co-leading the prayer ministry focus on the Spirit on 5th April. We have recently welcomed Karen de Fraine, Diane Kelly and Caro & Peter May to the prayer ministry team.

There have been many answers to prayer and we give glory to God for this. It would be lovely to hear more shared across the fellowship in order to build each other up in our faith as well as giving the Lord His due credit.

Each house group has a prayer champion, linked to each other via WhatsApp, so that prayer requests can quickly be shared. We are careful to check consent and maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality.

We are currently reviewing ways in which both corporate prayer and small group prayer (e.g prayer triplets) can be encouraged. Please talk to Julie Barker if you wish to be linked up in a prayer triplet or you have ideas to share about whole church prayer, in person or online.

Our website has a section dedicated to prayer with lots of useful links, including the link to our private prayer wall which can be used to post prayers or give thanks for answered prayer. In the year ahead I hope to facilitate a visit to the “Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer” site near Birmingham.

Finally, but importantly, do plan ahead for our dedicated time of 10 days prayer during Thy Kingdom Come, 29th May—9th June.

Julie Barker
Prayer Ministry Co-ordinator

Safeguarding

I would like to start this report saying a massive thank you to all the volunteers who have completed online training this year. I really appreciate the support you have shown to make our church as safe as possible for every single person who comes through our doors.

The PCC includes safeguarding as an agenda item at every meeting, this is a requirement by the Church of England and enables us to be mindful of good practice in all areas of church life.

During the year I have attended (via Zoom!) the termly Parish Safeguarding Officers network meeting which is a good forum to hear latest updates and to be able to learn from others in the same role. I have also attended the diocesan conference on safeguarding, where the new National Standards were introduced. I am currently attending monthly training on each of the standards. The National Standards are broad statements of what the Church of England wants to achieve in the most important dimensions of its safeguarding work. Now more than ever it is vital that the church is transparent and has the highest standards for safeguarding to avoid mistakes and errors in the past and I am excited to be part of this work.

During the coming year I will -

- Continue to respond to any safeguarding concerns as they arise
- Ensure that everyone has the correct level of training for their role
- Keep safeguarding prominent at PCC meetings and to start work on the National Standards
- Continue to work on the Dashboard
- Be involved with any policy updates as and when needed

Ann Clark, Parish Safeguarding Officer

Outreach to the Older Person

We are pleased to report that the Moorfield Court fortnightly Home Group is still going strong. At present we are studying the book of Romans. We also hold Holy Communion there every 6 weeks. Members of our team are also involved in Coffee Mornings at Kings Court which are run by Churches Together in Southwell and we send Birthday Cards to over 70s.

Ann Stafford



Toddlers

What have been the highlights of the past year ?

Firstly we should celebrate our fantastic Toddler team who come week by week to support Toddler families. They work really hard and we receive many lovely verbal and written messages about our service. We continue to feel privileged to do what we do. We now average about 35-40 plus families each week. Lots of families still come from the outlying villages which is very good. We have a prayer time at the start of Toddlers for 5 mins. Our prayer time at the end of Toddlers is very important to us and we pray for Toddler families when they ask us to. We have been encouraged by the attendance of some of our Toddler families at the recent Kids and Families fun times on every 3rd Sunday at 4 pm.

What is our vision for the future:-

To continue to be a safe place showing God's love and care for all who come. To encourage families to join us at K&F fun times. To add in more Christian songs to our repertoire. To discuss with the church possible sessions to invite people to eg:- Dad's and Toddlers (Saturday am) and cheese and wine evenings with a speaker.

How in our ministry have we seen the vision implemented ?

We would like to continue to encourage parents/grandparents/carers to come to church social events, quiz nights and Kids and Family Fun times. There have been several families from Toddlers that have come to K&F recently. We are always looking for ways to engage in conversations and deepen our relationships with our families.

It is necessary to be thinking of new and exciting things to do although we are restricted by lack of accessible storage space.

How do we see it being built upon ?

Toddlers is always at its best when we have enough helpers to chat with people and clear up at the end. Please continue to pray for us, for safety each week, for health and for sharing God's love and care with those we meet and talk to.

Please come and chat to one of us if you think God is calling you to join our happy team.

Christine Cross and the Team

Kids & Families Fun Time

This was launched in late spring 2025. Over the preceding year, numbers for our 4pm service had dwindled to almost none. It was clear that people were not attracted to come to a 'service' as such. After much thought and prayer, plus some consultation, Shelagh Baird-Smith and I began a very informal time of play, craft activities, and food, with the gentle inclusion of a Christian focus, e.g. thanking God for the harvest in September. Numbers have fluctuated widely, from single figures of children, plus adults, to almost 50. On several occasions the inclusion of a bouncy castle has proved very popular.



Children come from the Toddler group, Holy Trinity Infant School, and the Youth Café (Ks2, 7-11s). At Christmas it took the form of a Scratch Nativity on Christmas Eve, which attracted 20 children plus assorted adults. We finish with a short word about the theme (e.g. God's love, Creation) and a prayer. Although it cannot be described as a new worshipping community, it is aimed at providing a next step towards faith, following on from Toddlers, and is ably supported by many of the fantastic Toddler team.

Moving forward, the vision is to find a way for some families to come to faith. The Fun Times may be a step along the way to an enquirers group, or some other opportunity for faith to be explored more meaningfully, as we look to becoming a multigenerational church again. We are seriously thinking of buying a bouncy castle, too!

Suzanne Dent



Worship Group

Worship group meet to practise on a Thursday evening. We are responsible for leading the sung worship at the weekly 10.30am Sunday service. In addition to this, we support special services, such as those over the Christmas period.

A highlight this year has been working with the music group who continue to support the leadership of sung worship. It has been great to continue to introduce new songs and welcome new members to the group. It is lovely to see people connect with God through sung worship.

The vision for worship group is to combine prayer, reflection and singing. We want to ensure that God is at the centre of our worship by inviting the Holy Spirit in when we sing. We hope that every member of the congregation can use worship as a way of getting closer to God.

In the last year we have introduced new songs including ones which are reflective and those which are more powerful in nature. We have welcomed new members to the group who have enabled us to have a more extensive rota, allowing people to enjoy being part of the congregation when they are not playing / singing. It has also helped to bring new ideas and ways of leading sung worship.

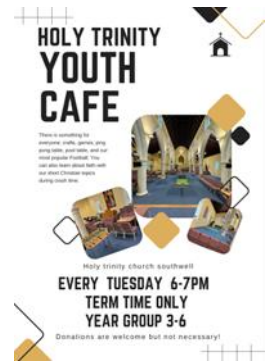
Over the next year we want to continue to develop the leadership roles within the worship group so more people are leading worship on a Sunday morning. We want to continue to introduce songs that allow us to connect with God and explore new ways of worship. We will be going to Christian festivals to hopefully bring back up to date and inspiring worship songs.

Thank you to all members of the worship group for the wonderful work you do, it is greatly appreciated.

Kelly and Andy Wall

Youth Ministry

During the past year Youth Cafe 1 has continued to thrive and be very well supported by volunteers from the church and attracts large numbers of children aged 7 to 11, mostly from outside the church. We held a very successful Christmas party and also delivered some bags of Christmas presents to some families in Southwell that the school advised might benefit from this, entirely financed by donations from the church.



As we move forward we see a need to re-establish a group for older children and we are in the process of thinking what that might look like.

Several children from Youth Cafe have attended our monthly Kids and Families fun time which is encouraging.

We are very grateful to all those who help us out in running this ministry.

Chris Stead and Tammy Morton

Tear Fund Quiz

November 2024 – Everyone agreed that this had been very successful in terms of fun, numbers and donations which on the night amounted to £732.

We received a warm thank you from Tearfund who said that 556 churches and community groups participated raising over £188,000.

PCC were positive about holding another in 2025.

