



St Peter's

Leckhampton
Parish Church

*Parochial Church Council
Annual Report for 2025*

Our Vision Statement

St Peter's Church, Leckhampton exists to love and worship God,
to serve its neighbours and to share the love of Jesus Christ.

The Parish Prayer

Loving God
Open our eyes that we might see you.
Open our ears that we might hear you.
Open our hearts and minds that we might respond to you
and bring others to know you.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord who lights our way.
Amen

Legal and Administrative Information

Name:	Parochial Church Council of St Peter's, Leckhampton (PCC).
Location:	St Peter's Church is located in Church Road, Leckhampton and is part of the Diocese of Gloucester within the Church of England.
Address for correspondence:	The Parish Office, Glebe Cottages, Church Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 0QJ.

Members

Following the 2025 APCM the composition of the PCC is as follows:
(the years elected are shown in brackets)

Clergy	Revd Canon Gary Grady (Team Rector) Rev Jade Scholes (Associate Priest)
Readers	Dereck Freeman Melissa Webb

EX-OFFICIO

Churchwardens	David Webber (2025) Sally Marlow (2025)
Deputy Churchwardens	Arthur Webb (2025) Duncan Hughes (2025)
Deanery Synod Members (2023-2026)	Peter Davies * Mike Riley Brad Coates

LAY MEMBERS

Lay Members elected 2023-2026 (one year of service remaining)	Jennie Hawdon Penny Piggott Christine Brown (Secretary) Anne Webber
Lay Members elected 2024-2027 (two years of service remaining)	Ro Baillie Helen Shill *† Sarah Wood Pat Long Andrea Hughes
Lay Member elected 2025-2028 (three years of service remaining)	Peter Marlow (Treasurer)
Co-opted Member	Richard Kerr-Wilson 2025 (Eco Officer)

* SCTM Representatives (2025-2026)

† Youth Representative (2025-2026)

Totals: PCC members: 10, Ex officio 7, co-opted 1

Notes on composition of PCC

Calculation of numbers on PCC : six representatives of the laity where there are not more than fifty names on the electoral roll, nine such representatives where there are not more than one hundred names on the roll and, where there are more than one hundred names on the roll, a further three such representatives for every one hundred (or part thereof) names on the roll up to a maximum of fifteen such members, and so that the aforesaid numbers "six", "nine", "three" and "fifteen" may be altered from time to time by a resolution passed at any annual meeting, but such resolution shall not take effect before the next ensuing annual meeting

Co-opted members: We can also have co-opted members, if the parochial church council so decides, not exceeding in number one-fifth of the representatives of the laity elected or two persons whichever shall be the greater, and being either clerks in Holy Orders or actual lay communicants of sixteen years of age or upwards. The term of office of a co-opted member shall be until the conclusion of the next annual meeting; but without prejudice to his being co-opted on subsequent occasions for a similar term, subject to and in accordance with the provisions of these rules.

- **Electoral Roll**: Currently there are **142** on our electoral roll, so we can have up to 15 lay members on the PCC as well as two co-opted members.
- **Ex Officio members**: The churchwardens and any deputy churchwardens are ex-officio members of the parochial church council by virtue of a scheme made under rule 18(4) of these rules.
- **Reps for Deanery Synod** are also ex officio members of the PCC.
- **The Secretary and Treasurer** will be elected from the PCC members.

Terms of Office

PCC members	3 years
Deanery synod	3 years
SCTM, Youth Representative	1 year
Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens	1 year
Secretary and Treasurer	1 year

Financial Information

Status:	The PCC is a Registered Charity (1134612)
Independent Examiner:	Mr Daryl Burns
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank plc, High Street, Cheltenham, Glos. CAF Bank Ltd, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent.

Aims and Organisation

The main purpose of the PCC is defined in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 as "to co-operate with the minister in promoting in the Parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical."

The following Committees promote the life of St Peter's:

Social Committee:	Revd Canon Gary Grady, Ro Baillie, Helen Yates
Pastoral Team:	Revd Canon Gary Grady, Revd Jade Scholes, Dereck Freeman, Jennie Hawdon, Sally Marlow, Anne Webber, Steve Whittington, Penny Williams

Ministry Report

Revd Canon Gary Grady, Team Rector

Thank you to all at St. Peter's for another good year.

We have continued to worship both in-person and on-line, with the 10am Sunday Service and Morning Prayer (Mon-Thu) being live-streamed throughout the year; we will continue to do this in 2026 where possible.

Our beautiful church building and churchyard continues to attract people to 'come and see' and we have once again shared God's love through the many baptism, wedding and funeral services we have conducted, and through the special services and music of our wonderful choir.

I continue to look ahead with optimism. Our numbers and finances (and church building) are all in good shape, our relationship with the local schools is excellent, and we continue to reach out in many ways to the local community through the different groups and events we offer.

Thank you to all who have supported the life of St Peter's in 2025, every blessing for 2026 and beyond.

Revd Gary

Review of financial activities and affairs for 2025

Peter Marlow, Hon. Treasurer

The accounts have three sections:

- The Receipts & Payments Account, which shows how much money we received and what we paid out in 2025;
- The Statement of Assets and Liabilities which shows the monetary and other assets which the Church has on 31 December 2025;
- Notes that explain the detail.

Overall, St Peters remains in a good financial position with total unrestricted funds carried forward of £176,046, an increase of £8,759 over 2024. Disappointingly our voluntary income from giving was down by 7% but our funds were boosted by a generous £9,000 legacy. Our employment costs increased by £1,200 due to the National Insurance changes in the Budget. However, in 2026 we will be able to claim these costs back through the Employment Allowance.

We had set a deficit budget on our Running Costs for 2025 of £10,074 but we ended the year with a smaller deficit of £6,533. We actually had a surplus of £6,128 in 2024.

Following the damage inflicted by the September 2024 storms, the organ was repaired at a cost of £21,706, with Ecclesiastical Insurance covering the cost except for our excess of £1,000. We also had to replace two ladders in the organ chamber at a cost of £1,604 which were not covered by insurance.

The music at St Peters continues to go from strength to strength. We purchased music books and choir robes at a cost of £2,309.

We supported the South Cheltenham Youth Project (£3,006) and Little Pebbles (£2,646). Carol Singing and Friday lunches raised £894 for the Childrens' Society.

We currently have 70 regular givers, 67 of whom give through the Parish Giving Scheme (down from 76). Regular giving massively helps St Peters to plan its finances.

The Friends of St Peter's Leckhampton scheme continues to thrive and currently has 55 members.

In December we purchased a new and improved card reader in church to supplement the existing one. Over the past year there were 802 transactions through the card readers to a value of £5,321 (in 2024 there were 611 transactions to a value of £3,770). The terminal fees were £258 over the year with a 2.5% transaction cost.

Policy on Reserves

The Quinquennial Inspection took place in 2025. The Churchwardens and PCC are setting aside unrestricted reserves of £25,000 minimum to cover liabilities. They also recognise that it is prudent to retain unrestricted reserves of at least 4 months running costs (£50,000) to meet unforeseen occurrences.

Expenses Payments

Other than the reimbursement of expenses and purchases made on the church's behalf, no payments have been made to members of the PCC.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Steve Whittingham the Assistant Treasurer and Mike Riley the Gift Aid Officer for their invaluable help in 2025. Also, thanks to Daryl Burns, Treasurer of St Christophers Warden Hill, for acting as our Independent Examiner.

ST PETER LECKHAMPTON PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
for the year ended 31 December 2025

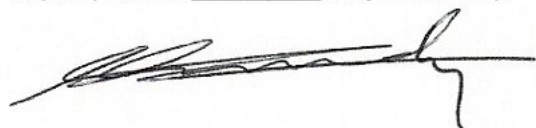
	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
INCOMING RESOURCES						
Voluntary Income						
Tax efficient planned giving		£ 73,698	£ 250	£ -	£ 73,948	£ 75,848
Other planned giving		£ 4,822	£ -	£ -	£ 4,822	£ 9,411
Collections at Services		£ 10,634	£ -	£ -	£ 10,634	£ 8,155
All other giving, inc Special Appeals	3	£ 7,207	£ 3,218	£ -	£ 10,424	£ 14,404
Gift Aid recovered		£ 20,453	£ 38	£ -	£ 20,491	£ 20,963
Legacies		£ 9,450	£ -	£ -	£ 9,450	£ 3,968
Grants	11	£ 374	£ -	£ -	£ 374	£ 12,117
Activities for generating funds						
Gross income from fundraising activities	4	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Income from investments						
Dividends, interest, income from property etc		£ 3,999	£ 164	£ -	£ 4,163	£ 4,938
Church Activities						
Statutory fees retained by the PCC (weddings, funerals etc)		£ 15,326	£ -	£ -	£ 15,326	£ 13,613
Gross income from trading (e.g. hall lettings, magazine, bookstall). NOT fundraising.	5	£ 9,378	£ -	£ -	£ 9,378	£ 7,557
Other Incoming Resources						
Any other income/ receipts not already listed	10	£ 20,706	£ -	£ -	£ 20,706	£ -
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		£ 176,046	£ 3,669	£ -	£ 179,716	£ 170,975
RESOURCES EXPENDED						
Costs of generating income						
Fund-raising activities (costs and payments)		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Church Activities						
Mission giving and donations	3	£ 39	£ 894	£ -	£ 933	£ 1,102
Diocesan parish share contribution		£ 76,522	£ -	£ -	£ 76,522	£ 76,522
Salaries, wages and honararia		£ 12,665	£ -	£ -	£ 12,665	£ 9,777
Clergy and staff expenses		£ 2,091	£ -	£ -	£ 2,091	£ 2,132
Church expenses						
Church expenses: Mission and evangelism costs	6	£ 6,707	£ 365	£ -	£ 7,072	£ 4,310
Church running expenses	7	£ 43,963	£ 2,543	£ -	£ 46,507	£ 43,330
Church utility bills (gas, electricity, water, oil)		£ 11,239	£ -	£ -	£ 11,239	£ 8,106
Cost of trading	8	£ 1,783	£ -	£ -	£ 1,783	£ 1,084
Major capital expenditure						
Major repairs to the church building	9	£ 22,638	£ -	£ -	£ 22,638	£ -
Major repairs to church hall or other PCC property, including redecoration		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
New building work to the church, church hall, clergy housing, or other PCC property	9	£ 4,367	£ -	£ -	£ 4,367	£ 96,046
Governance Costs (examination or audit fee)		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Other outgoing resources	10	£ 606	£ -	£ -	£ 606	£ 752
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		£ 182,621	£ 3,802	£ -	£ 186,423	£ 243,160
NET (OUTGOING)/INCOMING RESOURCES		£ (6,574)	£ (133)	£ -	£ (6,707)	£ (72,186)
Transfers between funds		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before gains		£ (6,574)	£ (133)	£ -	£ (6,707)	£ (72,186)
Gains on investment assets		£ 9,879	£ -	£ (11,935)	£ (2,056)	£ 5,342
Net movement in funds		£ 3,304	£ (133)	£ (11,935)	£ (8,763)	£ (66,843)
Funds brought forward at 1 January 2025		£ 131,173	£ 4,797	£ 11,934	£ 147,904	£ 214,748
FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER 2025		£ 134,477	£ 4,664	£ 0	£ 139,141	£ 147,904

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
PCC CAF Bank Account 00006604	£ 16,013	£ 4,664	£ -	£ 20,677	£ 27,377
PCC Lloyds Bank Account 00124049 (Flower Fund)	£ 834	£ -	£ -	£ 834	£ 760
Flower Fund Cash	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 81
PCC Lloyds Bank Account 02170803 (inactive)	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
PCC CCLA Deposit Account CB3025973	£ 62,578	£ -	£ -	£ 62,578	£ 62,578
PCC Lloyds Bank Deposit Account (inactive)	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
PCC CCLA Investment CB3025974	£ 49,599	£ -	£ -	£ 49,599	£ 39,720
MONETARY ASSETS	£ 129,024	£ 4,664	£ -	£ 133,688	£ 130,516
PCC CCLA Investment CB3025975 (Gloucester Trust Funds) *	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 11,935
OTHER MONETARY ASSETS	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 11,935
Fixed Assets (Furniture, Shed, Office & Cottages)	£ 5,454	£ -	£ -	£ 5,454	£ 5,454
FIXED ASSETS	£ 5,454	£ -	£ -	£ 5,454	£ 5,454
				£ 139,141	£ 147,904

* £11,900 shares moved from Gloucester Trust Funds to PCC Investment account to cover churchyard maintenance costs.

Adopted by the PCC on 13 January 2026 and signed on behalf by:



Rev Canon Gary Grady, PCC Chair & Team Rector

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1 Basis of Accounting

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 on the Receipts & Payments basis.

In Receipts & Payments the closing cash balance reported in the accounts is:

- the cash balance on the last day of the financial year (December)
- plus any money received before the end of the year but only banked in the following year
- less any cheques written or other payments made before the end of the year but not cleared through the bank until the following year.

2 Accounting Policies

The accounting policy is Receipts and Payments basis of preparation.

Restricted Funds represent donations or grants received for a specific object or invited by the PCC for a specific object.

The funds may only be expended on the specific object for which they were given.

Any balance remaining unspent at the end of each year must be carried forward as a balance on that fund. The PCC does not usually invest separately for each fund.

Unrestricted Funds are the General funds which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes. The PCC on occasion Designates some of their General funds, earmarking them for a specific purpose. These funds are still unrestricted.

The format of the accounts is the official Diocesan Parish Return.

3 All other giving including special appeals

	Unrestricted	Restricted	
General Donations (not Gift Aided)	£ 6,142		
Little Pebbles donations	£ 406		
Coffee Pig	£ 442		
Freewill Offering	£ 217		
Childrens' Society		£ 894	Friday Lunches & Carol Singing
Friends of St Peter's Leckhampton		£ 1,689	Excluding Gift Aided Donations
Quiet Day		£ 259	
Refugee Project refund		£ 10	
Youth Work		£ 365	
TOTAL	£ 7,207	£ 3,218	

4 Income from fundraising activities

See Note 3 above

	£ -
TOTAL	£ -

5 Income from Trading

	2025	2024
Flower income	£ 1,777	£ 981
Magazine income	£ 528	£ 979
Other income (eg. Printing, Book Sales)	£ 1,161	£ 513
Church & Cottage lettings income	£ 5,912	£ 5,085
TOTAL	£ 9,378	£ 7,557

6 Mission & Evangelism Costs		Unrestricted	Restricted
Little Pebbles		£ 2,646	
Youth Project		£ 3,006	£ 365
Other (Parish Cards)		£ 1,055	
TOTAL		£ 6,707	£ 365

7 Church Running Expenses		2025	2024
General Church Running Expenses		£ 10,376	£ 11,494
General Church Maintenance		£ 6,455	£ 3,580
Churchyard Maintenance		£ 10,893	£ 10,066
Music costs		£ 12,332	£ 12,173
Administration costs		£ 136	£ 121
Insurance costs		£ 6,314	£ 5,896
TOTAL		£ 46,507	£ 43,330

8 Cost of Trading			
Flower costs		£ 1,783	£ 1,084
Magazine costs*		£ -	£ -
TOTAL		£ 1,783	£ 1,084

* The Magazine is produced in-house so the costs are incorporated in 'Running Expenses' and 'Salaries'.

9 Major capital expenditure		Unrestricted	Restricted
Organ Repair 1st Payment (Nicholson)		£ 2,171	
Organ Repair 2nd Payment (Nicholson)		£ 3,256	
Organ Repair 3rd Payment (Nicholson)		£ 9,768	
Organ Repair 4th Payment (Nicholson)		£ 6,512	
Organ Repair - Ladders (Nicholson)		£ 1,604	
Quinquennial Report (Bartosch)		£ 932	
Music Books (Norwich Books)		£ 1,999	
Cassocks & Surplices (Croft)		£ 410	
Card Reader (CollecTin)		£ 354	
TOTAL		£ 27,005	£ -

10 Other Incoming/Outgoing Resources

Incoming		
Insurance Claim for Organ Repair		£ 20,706
Total incoming		£ 20,706
Outgoing		
South Cheltenham Team costs		£ 606
Total outgoing		£ 606

11 Grants		Unrestricted	Restricted
Listed Places of Worship Grant (APP-00033633)		374	£ -
TOTAL		£ 374	£ -

12 Restricted Funds carried forward		
Churchyard maintenance		£ 164
Quiet Day		£ 259
Friends of St Peter's Leckhampton		£ 3,889
Cottages Fabric Legacy		£ (754)
Charities (balance)		£ 51
Churchyard Seat (Scott)		£ 400
Organ Scholarship		£ 203
Magazine Binding		£ 25
Audio-Visual		£ 393
Music Festival		£ 8
Piano Appeal		£ 25
TOTAL		£ 4,664

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF ST PETER, LECKHAMPTON**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts (attached) of the Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Peter, Leckhampton (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Name: Daryl Burns

Address: Rose Tree Cottage, Sunnyfield Lane, Cheltenham GL51 6JD

Date: 14/2/26

Churchwardens report for the 2026 APCM

Churchwardens: David Webber and Sally Marlow, Deputy Wardens: Arthur Webb and Duncan Hughes

David Webber and Sally Marlow continued as Churchwardens for a further year with Arthur Webb and Duncan Hughes as Deputy Wardens. David and Sally have met regularly with Rev Gary to discuss church policy, and this has given both them and Gary the opportunity to talk frankly and in confidence, and for them to offer him support, and to pass on pastoral concerns that may have come to their attention. This is in addition to the more formal Standing Committee meetings. The PCC has also maintained its regular timetable of meetings.

Other regular duties have included the completion of various surveys and official documents as required by the diocese. This year we had the 5-yearly Inspection of Registers and Records where we had to present all the records or show that they had been archived. A couple of records were missing, including an Inventory from 1969, but these were all located and accounted for later.

We attended the annual Archdeacon's Visitation service where the wardens were officially admitted to their office, and David was able to attend Bishop Rachel's Garden Party. Unfortunately it clashed with our choir singing evensong in the cathedral, which Sally had already committed to.

The altar servers have continued to assist with the smooth running of services. Thanks are due to them and to the readers, intercessors, welcomers, junior church leaders, bell ringers, choir and organist who all make a valuable contribution to services, and to the flower arrangers for their inspirational displays. Thanks also to Liz in the office for keeping day to day life of St Peter's running smoothly.

The Church Building and Grounds

The Quinquennial Inspection was carried out by the architects in July 2025 with the report received in November. It was very thorough, totalling 56 pages, and for the first time with the help of drones. The architects have now been commissioned by the PCC to oversee urgent and 'within 12 months' work. Unfortunately the government has withdrawn VAT relief for Places of Worship so all repair works will have the 20% added.

We also had the 4/5 yearly Ecclesiastical Insurance Survey to assess our level of risk. I'm pleased to report that the assessor was impressed as we had everything in place and all the required electrical testing and regular checks, such as the emergency lighting, and fire safety have been carried out by the appropriate agencies.

During a tremendous storm in September 2024 water entered the organ chamber damaging the organ. The repairs, paid for by Ecclesiastical Insurance, were carried out in 2025 by Nicholson Organs Ltd of Malvern.

We are grateful to Mohammed who continues to keep the churchyard neat and trim, and to Brad Coates for coordinating any churchyard work, including checking the safety of grave stones, tree maintenance and dry stone walling

Social activities continue to flourish at St Peter's from regular chats over coffee on Sunday mornings to refreshments served after occasional concerts in church, special services and celebrations of festivals. We are grateful to the catering committee, led by Helen Yates, who undertake the organisation of many of these events.

The lights on the Christmas tree in the churchyard and round the lychgate during Advent have become a tradition. We are very grateful to Peter Davies who organises the lighting.

There are plans afoot for the Cottages, and although we are kept in the loop, the wardens are not involved with this. More information is available from Richard Kerr-Wilson and/or the Eco Group Report.

Brownies - 15th Cheltenham (St. Peter's, Leckhampton) Brownie Pack

Livvy Niblett

15th Cheltenham Brownies currently have 20 girls at the unit. We have been working towards both programme and challenge badges during some of our Brownie meetings.

Our unit enjoyed an Autumnal themed activity day in October 2025 at Cowley Adventure. The Brownies took part in a range of Autumnal themed activities. We also enjoyed taking part in a joint Thinking Day event with 37th Cheltenham Rainbows in February 2026 to mark 100 years of Thinking Day celebrations. We enjoyed an activity day at Cowley Adventure where both Rainbows and Brownies took part in a range of activities all linked to our 5 world centres in Girlguiding. We ended the event with a very delicious afternoon tea!

We have a Brownie Sleepover planned for May 2026. This will be the second one we have organised for the unit. Our Brownies are very excited! We are looking forward to once again making use of the outside space at the cottages and spending some meetings outdoors next term.

CCP (Caring for Communities and People) Donations

Gilly Whittingham

CCP relies on the generosity of supporters in the local community to donate food items for those living in poverty and struggling to provide food for themselves and/or their families. The foodbank has recently been refurbished and is open on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday each week.

The congregation at St Peters continues to give generously to the foodbank throughout the year donating food and toiletry items. I am aware that some also make regular monetary donations. Each time that I visit to deliver donations to CCP I am always met with thanks by the members who work there.

During 2025, the now regular Lent appeal brought in over 100kgs of donations. The donations at the Harvest Festival service amounted to over 140kgs. The annual Hamper Scamper in the run up to Christmas appeal continues and added a further 26kgs. With the regular weekly donations collected in the porch the total for 2025 amounted to 819kgs.

A very big thank you to everyone who has donated in 2025 and is continuing to do so into 2026.

Cheltenham Deanery Synod

Peter Davies

In the Church of England and other Anglican churches, a Deanery Synod is convened by the Rural Dean (or Area Dean) and/or the Joint Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod, who is elected by the elected lay members. It consists of all clergy licensed to a benefice within the deanery, plus elected lay members.

Those elected to represent St Peter's Leckhampton with the Cheltenham Deanery are Peter Davies, Bradley Coates and Mike Riley. The Area Dean for the Cheltenham Deanery is The Reverend James White.

Reports containing minutes of deanery Synod meetings are reported to the PCC at St Peter's. During 2025 meetings were held as follows:

- March 18 at St Paul's Church, St Pauls Rd Cheltenham.
- June 25 at Emmanuel Church, Naunton Park, Cheltenham.
- October 23 Cornerstone Community Centre, Severn Rd, Cheltenham.

2026 Meeting for 2025:

- February 24 at St Christopher's Church Lincoln Avenue.

This was the Ninth Meeting of the Cheltenham Deanery Synod 2023 - 2026.

Churchyard Maintenance

Brad Coates

The churchyard continues to be a haven of tranquillity and beauty thanks to Mohammed and the gang of volunteers. This year we have engaged a tree surgeon to survey the lime trees and a maintenance plan will span the next 3 years. Recently, the yew over the North door has been trimmed, the Cottage garden hedge has had a considerable trim and Iain's Elbow has been removed.

The main task this year will be to repair the dry stone walls. Cutting is due to start soon.

As ever, any extra volunteers will be warmly welcomed.

Cottages Bookings

Liz Johnson, Parish Administrator

We have had steady bookings over the past year where the Cottages have been used by various church and community groups as well as private hirers. St Peter's groups include Little Pebbles, Julian Group, Ladies Fellowship, the Choir, the Flower Guild, the Social Committee, the PCC and the Craft Group. Other hirers include private parties, receptions and lunches, primary school tuition, Clergy Network, Gloucestershire Spiritual Direction Trust, Art and Play Therapy, the Confraternity of St James, other church's away days and Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council. We have Brownies and Rainbows each week during term time.

To comply with our Eco Church ethos, I try where possible to order sustainable and Fair Trade supplies for the Cottages. We encourage all hirers and church groups to use the recycling boxes and food bin in the Cottages: please help in this by squashing tins/plastic/cardboard where possible, only putting clean items into the boxes and changing the liner in the food bin after use.

Craft-T-Time

Helen Shill

The Craft group met every Wednesday morning from 10-12 this year, apart from Christmas Eve! We currently have 5-10 members and we enjoy our time in the Cottages making our Craft, chatting and having a tea/coffee with biscuits the members bring.

This year we have; knitted Christening blankets for the Christening services for young children at St Peter's, knitted premature baby clothes for Gloucester Hospital, Twiddle Muffs for people with Dementia, Blanket squares for the Homeless, jumpers and cardigans for relatives, Embroidery, Painting, Drawing, making cards and crocheting. We have knitted Christmas Stars and Easter pockets for tissues with 'God Bless You' written on for the Anna Chaplaincy Care Home projects. These are distributed to people in Care Homes in Cheltenham and Bishops Cleeve, and are very well received.

We held a Craft Show in the Autumn at the Cottages after the 10am Sunday Service and displayed some of our work; Greeting cards, knitted Christmas trees and Angels from previous Anna Chaplaincy projects, Embroidery and Premature Baby Clothes.

All are welcome to join us on Wednesday mornings, come along to make some Craft or just for a cuppa and a chat!

Eco-Church

Richard Kerr-Wilson

We met nine times during 2025. Over the year, we were sorry to say goodbye to Jacqui Dunlop, Penny and Andrew Piggott but welcomed Sara Scorey, Tracey Lockstone and Tim Foulger.

Most of the meetings were discussing policies and requirements before we could submit our application to A Rocha for an Eco Church Gold award. These included a plan to achieve carbon net zero and a land

management plan. Policies were all submitted to the PCC for approval. We finally submitted our application to A Rocha at the beginning of December. Follow-up will involve an on-line discussion and a site visit before we can be considered for Gold.

In early May, a plant share and give away was held in the Cottages' garden after the 10:00am service. This proved to be popular and will be repeated next year on a similar date.

A further plant survey in the churchyard was carried out by Ben Gilchrist, which is now the fifth consecutive survey that he has carried out. A visit to the churchyard from Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust took place in July with very positive comments about what we have done in rewilding. This was a result of a tie-up with a member of the eco group at St Philip & St James. An evening 'Wildlife Gardening Event' was organised by both groups at Pip & Jim's in October, when talks were given by both Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and the Gloucestershire Beekeepers Association. Over 100 people attended and a similar event is planned for next year.

An illustrated PowerPoint presentation informing the congregation about Eco Church was prepared and shown on the screens in church. We hope this will be repeated on a future occasion.

In 2026, we hope to move closer to achieving carbon net zero and the A Rocha Gold award.

Thanks to all members of the Eco group for their enthusiasm and dedication.

Electoral Roll Officer's Report

Chrissie Brown

This is my first year as your Electoral Roll Officer and my thanks go to Eric Miller for his smooth handover. My thanks also for Liz Johnson's assistance. Last year the six yearly renewal of the Electoral Roll was completed with 146 applications. This year was a simple renewal of the Roll, after which the number stands at 142.

There are several reasons to be on the Electoral Roll, firstly you are identifying yourself as an active member of the church which enables you to vote at the APCM or be nominated for election to the PCC. The number of Deanery Synod representatives and Lay members of the PCC elected is also based on the number on the Electoral Roll. In particular, our Deanery Synod representatives enable St Peter's to contribute to the Deanery Synod so our voice can be heard. Anyone on the Electoral Roll will also be contacted with any essential information. Further applications can be made at any time, and regular worshippers are encouraged to add their names. The current numbers on the Roll are an under representation of the size of our congregation.

Flower Guild

Averil Murray

Well, we have had a very busy year and have produced lovely flowers for all the seasons and using the right colours. We are now small in number and yet we continue to fulfil all our festival arrangements and produce very good wedding flowers. This Easter will be tricky because quite a few of us will be doing at least 2 arrangements. We are not going to decorate the pulpit or the Lenten Cross, but we will manage everything else.

I realise that we are all getting older, but let us not be daunted or downhearted. We will go on for as long as we can and deliver flowers to the glory of God and the adornment of our lovely church.

Thank you to all of you for your hard work, loyalty and help in all you do. Thank you, Sally for your work as treasurer and to Kathy for all your secretarial expertise. I do appreciate you all, thank you.

Julian Group

Jennie Hawdon

Our monthly meetings in the Cottages have continued throughout the year. 'Be still and know that I am God' (Psalm 46) is essential to us in the busy-ness of our own lives. Indeed we believe it is relevant for people throughout the world in these times of turmoil and uncertainty. We are currently six from different areas of Cheltenham who share in a time of prayerful stillness and silence with God. As we come from different religious backgrounds and experiences, we have enjoyed some interesting discussions over tea and biscuits afterwards.

If you would like to join us for half an hour of quiet togetherness and reflection, we meet in the Cottages on the first Thursday of the month at 2.30 pm. Contact: Jennie Hawdon or the Parish Office for more details.

Junior Church

Liz Johnson

Junior Church provides activities for the children's area in church each week, with special activities for the First/Special Sunday services set out on a table at the front of church. We send email invitations to First Sundays to all baptism families and give paper invitations to those attending Little Pebbles. First/Special Sundays are also advertised on the website, in the newsletters and on our notice boards, and we give out bookmarks which list the year's First/Special Sundays.

It has been wonderful to see a full church for many of the First/Special Sundays in particular Christingle, '40 Acts' at the beginning of March, Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday with the children's areas bursting at the seams! It is encouraging to see an increasing number of families with young children at all Sunday services; a sign that they feel comfortable at St Peter's and are feeling that they are part of the church family.

A lively group of families met in the Cottages to make Christingles for Candlemas and a more select group to make posies for Mothering Sunday. Based on the popularity of these Saturday afternoon activities, we are planning a Spring Planting crafts and activities afternoon in May to complement the Sunday Spring Planting service the following day.

Ladies' Fellowship Group

Hermione Mason

We've had another enjoyable year with a variety of events. In March we joined the Men's Group for what has become our yearly Skittles evening. It was a lovely evening with lots of chatting and support when it was your turn to play. Then in April we had a talk from the Children's Society, one of the charities St Peter's supported. It was a very informative evening and it was good to know how the money we raise is being used. In June a few of us visited Highgrove. We had a wonderful tour of the Gardens on a very warm day and much needed cuppa afterwards plus a glass of Bubbly provided by Suzy's friend who works there. In August we visited St John's in Churchdown. Jacqui, who was at St Peter's, is the Vicar there. We were warmly welcomed by her Church Wardens and after an interesting and amusing talk about St John's history from Jacqui we were given a nice tea.

In October I called a special meeting to ask if some members could help me arranging our events going forward. In response, four ladies offered their help. So, in early December we met and set up a team, each agreeing to arrange at least two events. I had not been very well and was finding life a challenge so this was a great weight off my mind. Our other events have been an Afternoon Tea in the Cottages garden and meal at Morans, which almost everyone attended, we nearly took over the restaurant. To round off the year we gathered together in the Cottages to make Christmas wreaths, ably assisted by Sue Lawrence and myself. It was a fun evening and great way to round off the year.

Leckhampton Bellringers

Stuart Tomlinson

We currently have 19 ringers at Leckhampton, of which approx 16 are actively ringing. This is a good number for an eight-bell tower. However, like most towers, we do have a high proportion of older ringers. So, whilst we currently don't need to recruit, we do need to keep this under review.

We have continued to start our Monday practice with a learner's focused session at 7:00pm, with the main practice starting around 7:30pm. We often have 16+ ringers with a broad range of ringing abilities, making for a busy and varied practice. Lawrence Jackson started learning with us in February. He and our other learners are making good progress.

Sunday Service ringing is well attended and usually we have enough to ring on all eight bells. We continue to attempt a quarter peal most Sunday evenings. We remain a leading quarter peal tower and this year rang a total of 44. This included successful quarter peals prior to the 8am services on Easter Sunday and on Christmas Day. Congratulations to Brad Coates who rang his first quarter and to Jacob Coates who rang his first inside.

We only had one Peal attempt this year – Lessness Surprise Major in June, which was successful. I continue to annually book roughly 10 Saturday morning peal dates with Gary but since there are now fewer Peal requests, I am using more of these as extra training sessions.

We had a successful spring outing to Thornbury, Olveston, Hawkesbury, Wickwar and Cromhall, expertly organised by Gilly. Then a four-day trip to Dorset in July, ringing at 16 towers between Lyme Regis and Swanage, organised by Stuart, Gilly and Keith. Finally, a Quarter Peal Day in October organised by Chris. We successfully rang quarters at Hartpur, Ashchurch, Prior's Norton and Eckington.

I visit the belfry roughly every six-eight week's (sometimes with Keith) to do a visual check of the bells and fittings. The bells, frame and main fixtures are all in good order. However, some of the ropes need replacing (after seven busy years of use) and I have placed an order for a complete new set with Avon Ropes – this will cost just over £2,000 (including VAT) and it has been agreed that we will equally split the cost with the PCC. We may jointly recover some of this cost from donations – a Just Giving page is being set up and an article has appeared in the first new quarterly church newsletter.

We are also considering getting greasing points drilled to make future clapper lubrication easier. This would cost a few hundred pounds and would be funded fully by the bellringers.

Leckhampton C of E Primary School Foundation Governors report

Susan Laurence

As a maintained voluntary controlled school Leckhampton Primary school is built upon a strong Christian foundation with a vision for 'Open Hearts, Open minds and Open doors'. It has an inclusive approach with all pupils encouraged to reach their potential in learning and personal development in order to fulfil their potential to live life in all its fullness.

The school provides places for just over six hundred children. New pupils adapt to school life and quickly begin to work within their age-related expectations. A broad and balanced curriculum is provided. Pupils' attainment regularly exceeds national averages in the key curriculum subjects. For the low number of children in the school who have some form of disadvantage or who may have learning challenges their individual needs are identified in partnership with parents and teaching staff. This is overseen by the SENCo (Special Educational Needs) and all teachers and teaching partners provide ongoing support to pupils. Staff receive training to support the areas identified in the School Improvement Plan and are encouraged to develop their learning and leadership skills. A priority for 2025/26 is to embed the Gloucestershire's Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

Worship at the school is threaded through all key stages and delivered both in the classroom and for the whole school in the school hall. For twelve times during the school year the latter is led by Reverends Gary Grady and Jade Scholes. It has included themes such as hope, respect, truthfulness, thankfulness and forgiveness and is linked to scripture. Whole school worship is also led once a week by a different class of pupils. This is open to parents and other visitors and is well received.

Parents are invited to participate in the life of the school. As well as the half termly parents' evenings, there are 'drop in' morning sessions to look at the work in pupil's books, and invitations to 'coffee morning' talks to keep parents informed. For example, in January 2026, the local authority's educational psychologist attended to discuss ways of helping children deal with anxiety and worry. The fortnightly school Bulletin newsletter informs parents about what is happening in the school and extra school activities. It also highlights a 'Value for the Term' with encouraging notes about how that value can be discussed and shared in the home. For example, in the Spring term it has been 'Thankfulness' as a means to encourage kindness and recognition of diversity and each person's unique strengths.

The school encourages children to consider the wider community around the school and to get involved in ways to engage with the community. Children are encouraged to bring in Christmas foods to share with others for the annual 'Hamper Scamper' and to support various charity promotions across the year such as Children in Need and Comic Relief. Individual pupils and small groups have also made visits to people at the Sue Ryder Hospice and to sing carols at the Hampton's Care Home. In 2025, a year six pupil took a leadership role to campaign for the local authority to provide a pedestrian crossing. Pupils are encouraged to walk or bike to school to reduce car pollution outside the school.

The school's financial position is positive. The annual school premises inspection was completed in November 2025 together with the regular assessment of fire and health and safety policies. The safeguarding GSCP/KCSiE Audit and declaration was completed in November 2025. All school policies are regularly reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to publication.

The SIAMS inspector visited the school on 12th March 2026. The assessment was very positive and noted the strengths of the whole school family and how its Christian vision was lived out each day.

SIAMS - stands for the Strategic Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools.

Men's Group

John Laurence

There are currently 33 members of the Men's Group. There is no cost of membership. The majority of meetings are simply social events, and we meet in the Wheat Sheaf public house, on the first Thursday in the month, alternating between a lunch time meeting at 12:30 pm and an evening one at 7:30 pm. Three of the meeting however, are reserved for discussion of a particular topic. The most recent meeting of this type discussed the role of the Anglican Church in politics. Between five and ten members attend regularly. Some events such as the skittles evening attract more (about 20) but this includes members of the Ladies Group too. A recent meeting was shared with the visiting guests from Ramallah and their hosts from St Philip and St James, which again doubled numbers. This year an events schedule has been released, including two planned walks and a joint event with the Ladies Group taking place on 12th December.

Music

Kit Perona-Wright, Director of Music

Music continues to flourish at St. Peter's, and there is much to look back on and be proud of in the last year. In addition to our usual round of morning services where the musical contribution has been to a consistently high standard, complementing the liturgy, we have held a number of special services throughout the year also. These include evensongs for Harvest, Candlemas and the Patronal Festival, a special service for Remembrance (with brass and cello), an Advent Carol service, 9 Lessons and Carols (with brass), St. Mark Passion by Wood for Passion Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Ascension Day and a visit to Gloucester Cathedral to sing evensong in the summer as well. The repertoire continues to grow and develop, ensuring a mix of well known and newer items, and this is being well received by members of the choir and congregation. The special services continue to attract large congregations - including visitors to St. Peter's specifically for the music - and music serves as a really important part of the outreach of the church.

Tribute should be paid to the members of the choir and those other musicians who come to play/sing and support us throughout the year. We have welcomed additional new members, and - when at full strength - are approaching around 40 members! However, the work is never done, and we will always need to replace those people who leave for various reasons (young and old), so marketing and having an online presence is really important for both church and choir.

Parish Magazine

David Webber, Editor;

Sue Marlow, Business Manager; Peter Davies, Distribution Manager; Liz Johnson, Printing

The Parish Magazine began in 1888 when Rev R E Trye wrote that he proposed launching a Record of Parish News and a 'kind of Parish Register'. It continued for 137 years until December 2025.

Having been editor for the past 16 years I decided it was time to 'retire' hoping that someone else would take it on. Unfortunately it was not to be so the magazine in its current format is no more. However, it has given Rev Gary the opportunity to have a rethink and bring it up to date. It will be replaced with a Quarterly online newsletter, with some printed copies available on request.

Thanks are due to everyone who has supported and contributed in any way towards the magazine over many years. Past copies, back to about 1895, can be viewed at Gloucester Archives, and recent copies have been lodged with the British Library.

Pastoral Team

Sally Marlow

The St. Peter's 'Pastoral Team' continues to support the clergy in the following areas:

- Keeping up to date with those who are ill, absent, or in need.
- Visiting the sick and housebound.
- Taking Home Communion to those unable to get to church in the short or longer term.
- Care Home ministry – leading a communion service (using the reserved sacrament) twice monthly at Hampton House and monthly at Middleton House. At Lilleybrook Care Home we lead a monthly service of hymns and prayers. Carol Services were held in all three homes this Christmas and were greatly appreciated and well attended.
- Bereavement visiting.
- Monthly Friday Lunch with Friends regularly brings 12-20 people together for a shared lunch.

Wedding Preparation is now organised by the South Cheltenham Team. Baptism preparation is negotiated by Rev Gary with individual families.

The team meets every other month to share updates on all of the above areas and is made up of Rev Gary, Dereck Freeman, Jennie Hawdon, Penny Williams, Anne Webber, Steve Whittingham and Sally Marlow. Rev Jade attends and supports the team when time allows.

PCC Report

Chrissie Brown – PCC Secretary

Following last year's APCM, St Peter's PCC consisted of our Clergy, Readers, ten Lay members, one co-opted member and six Ex-Officio members. At the first PCC meeting after the APCM we elected our PCC officers. Revd Canon Gary Grady continuing in his role as Chair. David Webber and Sally Marlow were elected to be our Church Wardens. Arthur Webb and Duncan Hughes were elected as Deputy Church Wardens. Peter Marlow was elected as Treasurer, Christine Brown as PCC Secretary and Richard Kerr-Wilson as our Eco Officer.

Peter Davies, Brad Coates, and Mike Riley represent the PCC at Deanery Synod meetings and report any relevant information back to the PCC. Peter Davies and Helen Shill represent the PCC at South Cheltenham Team meetings and report any relevant information to the PCC. Helen Shill is also our Youth Representative.

The PCC have met five times during the last PCC year. At our meetings, the agenda has covered, Communications, Building and ground maintenance, Finance, Safeguarding, South Cheltenham Team update, Health and Safety, Mission Planning and Eco Matters. Any other business can be added to the agenda as needed. The Standing Committee have met three times, and reports of any discussions were received by the PCC, discussed where necessary and recorded in PCC Minutes.

The highlights of the year have included a successful insurance claim for the storm damage which allowed completion of the repair of the organ and roof. The successful insurance claim meant that the money set aside for the work is now available for other projects approved by the PCC. Our Safeguarding Policies have been reviewed and approved by the PCC. With the assistance of Sally, our Safeguarding Officer, we have completed a Safeguarding worksheet with the aim of promoting a healthy and safe church culture. Several actions were identified, some of which have already been implemented. All PCC members have completed the Diocesan Safeguarding training.

The PCC have agreed a Net Zero plan and Waste and Recycling policy and support Richard and his committee as we seek the Gold Eco award.

Gary presented the PCC with his analysis of the discussions at our Mission planning day, and the PCC have agreed on our Mission Priorities.

Rainbows (37th Cheltenham (Leckhampton) Rainbows)

Maggie Ansell – Rainbow Leader

The Rainbows have had a busy time since Spring last year working on and completing our unit meeting activities and skills builders which make up our Rainbow programme.

Our theme for the Summer term was 'Skills for My Future' the Rainbows had fun learning about themselves, working as a team and how to gain leadership skills. We ended the Summer term with our annual Teddy Bears Picnic in the cottages garden.

At the start of the Autumn term, we welcomed 2 new Rainbows and started working on our 'Express Myself' topic, exploring how we communicate. The girls enjoyed story making activities, a monster themed evening and our annual 'Indoor Camp'. We ended the term with a celebration evening to celebrate 3 Gold Awards and a Christmas party.

We began the Spring term welcoming 3 new Rainbows. We will be working on the 'Feel Good' topic. Activities to include healthy eating, well-being and being active.

Throughout the year I have been able to present several interest badges, theme awards and bronze, silver and gold awards.

Our staffing levels for this term have dropped as we have two volunteers who will be unable to attend due to health issues.

Safeguarding

Sally Campion

St Peter's continues to be committed to the safeguarding of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Any causes for concern are brought to the attention of Rev Gary and the PCC. Safeguarding is a required agenda item for every Standing Committee and PCC meeting. The policies are reviewed annually in accordance with Diocesan policy. Sally Campion remains as Parish Safeguarding Officer. Liz Johnson continues to act as Evidence Checker.

Sally Campion, as Parish Safeguarding Officer, regularly reviews the list of volunteers and employees. All individuals who required a DBS check, or a renewal, have been notified and asked to follow the DBS procedure. A DBS tracker is kept by Sally Campion as Parish Safeguarding Officer and Liz Johnson as Parish Office Administrator. All written declarations are stored securely in the Parish Office and are only accessible to Rev Gary, Sally Campion, Liz Johnson and the Diocesan Safeguarding Office.

Invites to complete safeguarding training continue to be sent out to those who carry out roles which require it. Liz Johnson as Parish Administrator keeps a record of all training completed. The training must be refreshed every three years if the role is maintained.

Sally Campion has set up and begun to use the St Peter's Parish Dashboard. This is an online system that gives assurance to parishes that they are complying with statutory requirements and Church of England policies. It gives an overview of the parish which can be shared with Rev Gary, Churchwardens and the PCC. The PCC have recently agreed to Sally Campion setting up a Safeguarding Hub which runs alongside the Dashboard. Liz Johnson, Parish Administrator, will also have access to the Hub. It is hoped that this system will provide an easier means of keeping track of DBS renewals and Safeguarding Training.

Sally Campion has continued to support Andrew Mallin-Jones, Safeguarding Officer at St Philip and St James, with delivering the Basic Awareness Safeguarding Course. Mr. Mallin-Jones is trained to deliver the course face to face. A requirement of delivery is that a second safeguarding officer is present to support anyone who finds the content of the course distressing. Places on courses are offered to anyone from St. Peter's who needs to complete the Basic Awareness Safeguarding training and would prefer to do it face to face rather than online.

Social Committee

Helen Yates

The Social Committee continued to support the Church Calendar in 2025 – with the following taking place:

Sunday 30th March - Mothering Sunday – Suzy kindly made her delicious Simnel cake once again which was enjoyed with coffee after the service.

Sunday 6th April – Fizz was served following the 10 am service to celebrate Gary's installation as an Honorary Canon at the Cathedral earlier in the week – congratulations Gary!

Hot cross buns were served following the Good Friday service and on Easter Day "fizz" was served along with coffee following the 10 am service.

On the evening of Ascension Day 28th May "fizz" was served after the service – which was held in the church as it was too windy to hold in the Cottage gardens. Fingers crossed for 2026!

Sunday 22nd June – more fizz!! This time following the confirmation service with Bishop Rachel – this was served in the cottage gardens alongside an ice cream van which was very popular!

Sunday 6th July – "Petertide" was celebrated – this was a "bring your own picnic" at 12 noon in the cottage gardens - with the committee providing strawberries (grown locally at Primrose Vale).

Pimms was served after the Choral Evensong for Harvest on Sunday 5th October.

All Souls service was held in the afternoon of Sunday 3rd November and well attended. Refreshments were served at the back of the church – giving the worshippers an opportunity to socialise together along with Rev Gary and Dereck.

The Carol service held on 21st December was followed by mulled wine, mince pies etc in the cottages – always a popular event.

My special thanks to Ro, Anna, Sally, Andrea, Penny, Helen S and Tracey and to our own "Star Baker" Suzy ... and not forgetting our friends who help us out – Val, Annelies, Averil, Duncan and Jim. Also thanks to Rev Gary for his ongoing support.

Our group enjoy playing a part in the "Ministry of Hospitality" - welcoming our family of St Peters and visitors at various events throughout the year... which could include a glass of "fizz"!!

South Cheltenham Churches

Revd Canon Gary Grady

The South Cheltenham Team is made up of St. Peter's, Leckhampton, St. Philip and St. James, Leckhampton, St. Christopher's, Warden Hill, St. Stephen's, Tivoli, and Emmanuel, Naunton Park, the latter of which is in partnership with Cheltenham Network Church (CNC), who hold a Bishop's Mission Order (BMO) for the Cheltenham Deanery, and work together as Emmanuel Network Church (ENC).

Our shared vision is:

'Our team will be joyful, prayerful and engaged with our communities. We will be thriving, growing congregations reflecting a vivid mosaic of spirituality. Shaped by our communities and working together with our ecumenical partners, we will offer a prophetic, Kingdom challenge. As a result, South Cheltenham will know itself to be loved and supported. Intrigued by what we do, they will have a growing awareness of our team and our Churches as the spiritual hubs of inclusive communities.'

During the past year we have said goodbye to Revd Dr Sarah Haden as the leader of ENC and welcomed Revd Adrian Beere as her replacement; thank you Adrian for saying yes to God and to the team.

The South Cheltenham Team Council meets 2-3 times per year, with representatives from each church working together to discern how we can share the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in this area. Please continue to pray for the diversity and unity of the team, we are stronger together.

St Peter's Little Pebbles

Amie Lidbetter

In the summer we said goodbye to several of our regular families and also gave our heartfelt thanks to Lara Skinner who had run the group for several years. There are currently 15 families "on the books" with about ten attending on average each week. A significant proportion of regular attendees are grandparents and this gives the group a lovely multigenerational dynamic. Most families are from the local area whilst a few travel across Cheltenham (one Grandmother commutes regularly from Kent).

Each week we provide an art or craft activity linked to something in the Christian calendar, a season/national awareness day or nursery rhyme. We also provide a snack as well as hot teas and coffees, water/squash. Singing, using a small bag of "props" for the children to choose from brings everyone together and provides an opportunity to explain what family friendly activities and services are on offer at St Peter's. Most recently, the Christingle making family activity proved very popular.

There continues to be a pool of wonderful helpers who come along on a rota basis, special thanks to the regulars - Penny, Ro, Andrea and Joey who do a fantastic job of welcoming our families, offering pastoral support and serving snack at 11am. Administrative support from Liz Johnson has also been invaluable. Rev Jade comes along when she is able and this provides a great opportunity for deeper pastoral support and theological exploration.

Everyone is very welcoming to newcomers and the group is an inclusive, caring and nurturing environment. Families continue to choose their nursery/preschool days around LP so that they can attend and we are frequently told, "I don't know what we would do without our Tuesday mornings". Members of the group meet up outside the regular sessions and there is a wonderful feeling of community.

Sunday Coffee

Ro Baillie and Joey Kerr-Wilson

The year has continued much as it has in the past. Numbers vary a little but those who join us for a cup of coffee or tea seem to thoroughly enjoy themselves. The "team" support each other well and generally speaking there isn't a problem filling the rota. Having had a really lovely summer refreshments were often taken out into the garden but without any shade protection some found it a little too warm! We have had a couple of people join the team which is excellent but as always we could do with yet more people to assist.

If anyone would like to join the team please do get in touch with either Ro Baillie 07717 002752 or Joey Kerr-Wilson 07990 813122. The more people that can help the fewer times it is necessary for people to add their name to the list!

Youth Update

Abbie Marsh – South Cheltenham Team Youth Worker

It has been a good year in the Youth Ministry with pockets of young people meeting across many different spaces in the team. Our biggest gathering continues to be SCT youth on a Tuesday. Current improvements being made to the building at ENC is making a difference to the youth work happening there, with cosier spaces to meet and with better storage for the youth equipment. Smaller groups continue at ENC and P&J on Sunday mornings, a Boy's group on Sunday evenings (new), and HSL (new), Bournside (partnered with YFC and Salvation Army) (new partnership), and Balcarras (partnered with Methodist Circuit, Charlton Kings Baptist, St Mary's and Holy Apostles) school groups during the week. Each space looks different but seeks to provide friendship, fun and intentional discipleship for young people in our team.

A highlight from the year was our Youth Weekend Away this February. This was well attended by almost all our young people in SCT Tuesday group. We had support from Barrie Voyce (Diocese) and Victoria Orr

(Sportily) who helped us run some of our talks and activities. A smaller group of us also joined in with Satellites Youth Camp in August (partnered with St Catharine's and Holy Trinity Tewkesbury).

Another highlight was the confirmation service in June where over a dozen young people took part in a day exploring baptism and confirmation, some then later choosing to be baptised and most confirmed. It was a joy to be a part of young people exploring and taking steps in their discipleship.

A smaller area of youth ministry is supporting our clergy in work with Year 6s in our local primary schools. In June we ran 'It's Your Move' in Warden Hill and St James' schools which is a faith based session exploring moving to secondary school. It is also the opportunity for Abbie to meet the young people and tell them about youth work in our Churches and local secondary schools.

Other ministry with young people happening in the team includes youth music and worship, and also through our choir ministries which engage young people with faith through music and sacramental tradition. In October we had a Joint Youth Social (partnered with Methodist Circuit, West Chelt and Holy Apostles) (new partnership). This was well attended and gave the Church youth groups an opportunity to meet and think about coming to our planned joint youth weekend for next year. P&J hosted a summer youth club in the summer, and there have been two joint youth sessions between P&J and Bethesda youth. Abbie ran some youth leader's deaf awareness training for St Paul's Church. And there are many other smaller pockets of youth ministry that happen throughout the year.

Abbie is at ENC most regularly on Sundays leading Sunday youth and also involved in wider service leading, and leads Sunday youth at P&J once a month. Abbie visits St Peter's and St Christopher's on a bi-monthly basis, which recognises how the youth ministry is a team vision and gives these Churches the opportunity to receive updates about the youth ministry and/or for Abbie to contribute to their service as a member of the SCT leadership team.

We have an amazing team of volunteers from across our team who have grown in confidence to serve young people using their unique giftings. Most of our session leaders and some helpers are on their final few sessions of the 10-session course that Abbie is running of 'Youthscape Essentials Training' for volunteer youth leaders. This is helping our team to know one another better, to hold shared values for what we do, and to build our practical skills.

We continue to host termly youth reps and young leaders meetings where young people from our Churches come together both to feedback on the youth ministry and for mutual support in their roles as young leaders in their Churches. We have an adult youth rep in each Church to support these young people and to strengthen the partnership between our team youth ministry and their Sunday Churches.

Abbie continues to be a member of the SCT and ENC leadership teams, and the children and youth working group at P&J. Revd Sarah left the team in April and Revd Gary became Abbie's interim line-manager. Abbie has had the opportunity to build on her skills through attending the National Youth Ministry Weekend in November, continuing to be a Youthscape Innovator brainstorming and piloting new youth ministry resources with young people, and completing a certificate in Youth Mental Health First Aid. She also continues to engage with Deanery Youth Ministry connect meetings run by Barrie Voyce, and YFC prayer meetings.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the youth ministry with their time, prayer and finances. The work goes a long way for each young person we engage with.

