

ANNUAL REPORT  
2024

# ST THOMAS SWANSEA

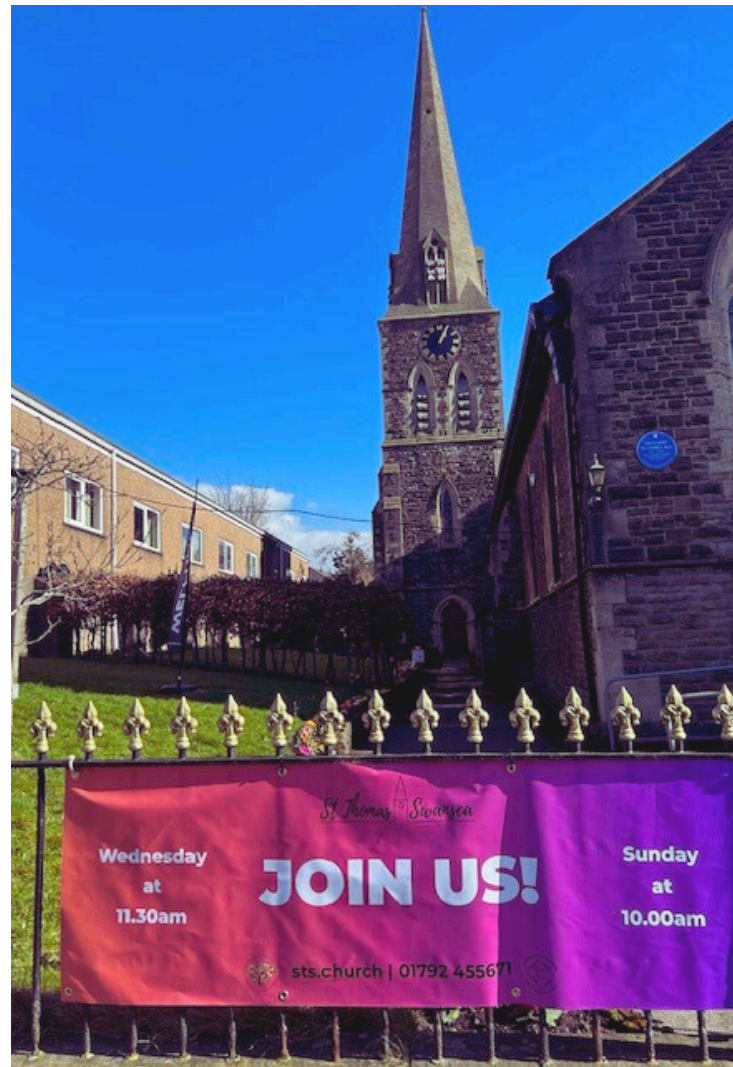


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# DEAR FRIENDS



We are a church shaped by a clear vision: to love and serve our community while sharing the hope of Jesus with those around us.

From our weekly community meals that bring together people of all ages, to initiatives like the 'Love Christmas: Gift Grotto', our passion is to demonstrate the love of Jesus in practical and meaningful ways.

Our commitment remains strong—to boldly proclaim the good news of Jesus, not only in our words but through the way we live. I hope this report encourages you as it reflects both the work God is doing among us and the exciting journey ahead as the Diocesan Resource Church.

We warmly invite you to partner with us—through your prayers, your time, your talents, and your financial support. This is a chance to step more deeply into the story God is unfolding through St Thomas Church, and we would be honoured to have you be a part of it.

A special mention must also be made to those members of the church and community that give of their time and finances to assist in the work that we do here. We will always remain grateful to each of them.

This is our church, and we are loving and serving the city in Jesus' name.

With love and prayers

Rachel Bennett & The PCC



# SNAPSHOT

HERE'S A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT'S HAPPENING



## **The Spire Café:**

A community not-for-profit cafe, serving fairtrade drinks and delicious food, with profits going directly back into the local community.

## **Community Hub:**

A hub that offers a safe space, with a guaranteed warm welcome, hot cuppa, sweet treats and a comfy sofa.

## **Community Grocery:**

A bridge between a foodbank and a supermarket, offering a wide range of foods and household essentials at an affordable price.

## **Breakfast and Board Games:**

Creating a warm, welcoming space for our community to enjoy a delicious breakfast, connect with the church community, and spend quality time playing games during the school holidays—all while easing financial pressure for those who may be struggling.

## **Baby Basics:**

Supporting vulnerable mothers and new born babies with a 3-month starter pack and more.

## **Community Lunch:**

Sharing a free two course hot lunch each week with our church family and community.

## **Stay and Play Cafe:**

A welcoming, loving and cafe space for parents, carers and children 0-4 years, to enjoy play, meet others and have refreshments. The community health visitor also runs a drop in service during this time and it has been very beneficial for our community.

## **Gift Grotto:**

A community hall transformed into a gift grotto for families needing extra support during the Christmas period. Gifts, treats and refreshments in a festive fun environment.

## **Boys Brigade and Girls Association:**

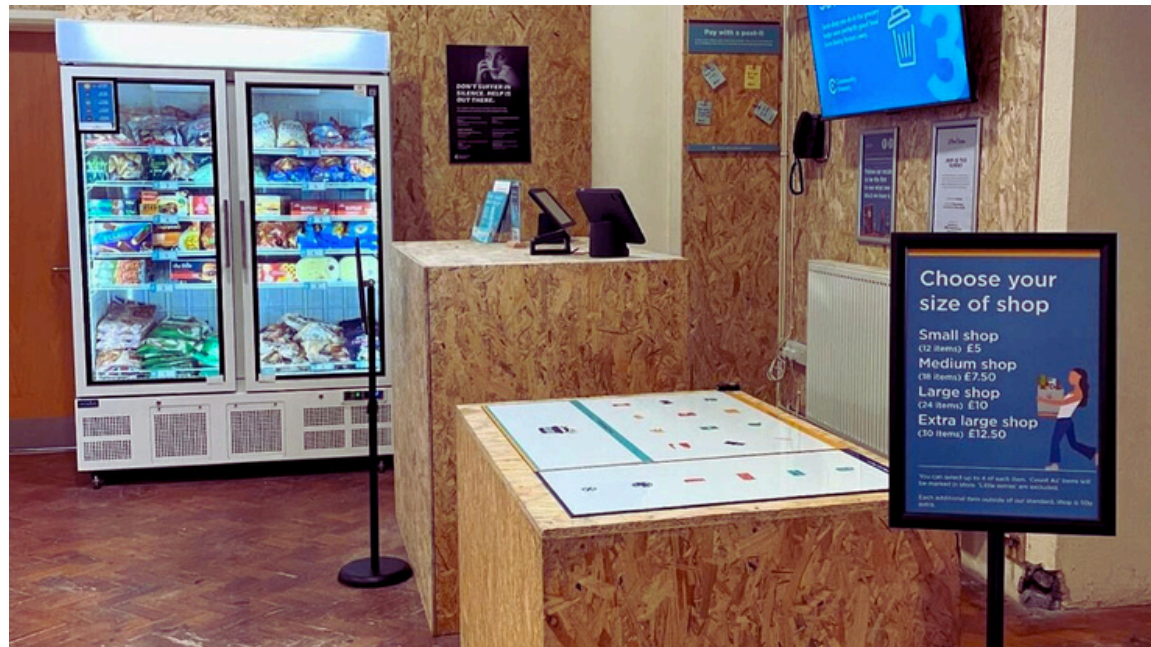
A weekly hangout to play games, eat food and chat about life and faith with our amazing young people.

## **Services:**

Gathering for 2 services each week for worship, prayer and inspiring talks.

# COMMUNITY GROCERY

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Our social outreach ministry had arms that reach beyond the east side of Swansea with its foodbank, baby basics and warm hub. Therefore we decided to embark on this new initiative – ‘The Community Grocery’.

The Community Grocery is a bridge between a foodbank and a supermarket, meaning members can come and shop for the whole family at the fraction of the cost of a supermarket. With over 20 community grocery’s already open across the UK, they have become a life-line to members who have really struggled with the rise in food and fuel costs.

All members of the community can sign up for £5 for an annual membership of the community grocery, giving them access to food shops multiple times per week. Members can purchase fresh fruit and veg, bakery items, freezer and chilled items, tinned foods and toiletries for as little as £5 per shop, helping them save on their shopping budget.

However, the Community Grocery is not only about food, members are given access to free courses such as learning how to cook, debt and money advice and exploring Christianity courses and much more.

The Community Grocery was launched on Monday 9th July and is open 5 days a week, Monday to Friday and has received a total of 2499 in 2024.



# LOVE CHRISTMAS: GIFT GROTTO

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The goal was to create a gift grotto over a weekend in our community hall, offering gifts, Christmas treats, and a welcoming space for caregivers to connect with the church family. While choosing gifts and treats for their child or children, they could enjoy the hospitality and support of our community.

The hall was set up like a shop, divided into age categories, with volunteers assigned to each section to assist. This setup allowed caregivers to have the independence and freedom to select their own gifts for their children, giving them a sense of choice and control.

We didn't want any child to go without a gift this Christmas. This project helped relieve some of the pressure on the most vulnerable families we work with or who are referred to us, providing them with access to free toys and festive treats. In total, over 130 children received gifts worth £60 each, along with sweet treats to bring extra joy to their Christmas.

# THE IMPACT 2024



**2499**

COMMUNITY GROCERY  
SHOPS

**1222**

FREE  
BREAKFASTS

**2276**

COMMUNITY  
LUNCHES

**148**

BABY BASIC  
REFERRALS

**132**

GIFT  
GROTTO  
PARCELS

**2962**

VOLUNTEER  
HOURS

**1300**

HOURS OF  
CHILDREN & FAMILIES  
WORK

**121**

WORSHIP  
SERVICES

**51**

FUNERALS

This impact is made possible by our amazing staff and volunteers, whose dedication to loving and serving the community often goes above and beyond, even behind the scenes.

# WORDS OF HOPE

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We've seen the impact through the numbers, and now, let's hear the stories:

I just wanted to express my gratitude, (and that of the mum who I was picking up for) for the baby bundle that I delivered today.

The communication with yourself has been excellent, and your colleague was expecting me when I arrived. She was super helpful in helping me to load my car. The sheer quality and generosity of the bundle was overwhelming for the mum who was ecstatic!

## **Community Midwife, Baby Basics**

I have found the Thursday morning sessions really helpful for the local families in the community, as it is a warm, safe space for parents to bring their children to the playgroup, and to facilitate access to health visiting support and advice. It can be challenging as a health visitor to attend to these families in their homes due to time constraints and caseload priorities. The private room at the church has been utilised for confidential support and advice that otherwise may not have been possible, and I have received positive feedback from the families that I have worked with. I am able to further my public health role in the community which has short and long term health and wellbeing benefits, and with the playgroup running it has enabled families to be less isolated in their homes. These families can provide emotional and psychological support to each other which is immeasurable, increasing their overall health and wellbeing. Furthermore, the staff at the church always provide a warm welcome to families, and provide a free breakfast for the toddlers in these harsh economic times. Any opportunity to strengthen community cohesion and reduce barriers to health monitoring, support and advice is welcome. I have enjoyed the opportunity and hope it will continue, thank you for all the support from the church and yourself.

## **Health Visitor, Stay and Play Cafe**

Serving at Love Christmas was such a blessing. To witness the transformative power of Jesus's love within the community and to play my part in that was incredibly moving. They are days that will stay with me forever.

## **Volunteer, Gift Grotto**



# ACCOUNTS

Below is a snapshot of the finances of St Thomas Church Swansea for 2024.

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior Year
<b>Incoming Resources</b>				
Donations & Legacies	45,889.05	34,671.90	80,560.95	261,047.52
Charitable Activities	21,358.30	91,996.37	113,354.67	121,832.83
Investments	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Trading Activities	254.60	28,559.02	28,813.62	21,307.35
Other	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>67,501.95</b>	<b>156,727.29</b>	<b>224,229.24</b>	<b>404,187.70</b>
<b>Resources Used</b>				
Charitable Activities	48,377.40	145,701.59	194,078.99	135,481.17
Raising Funds	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Governance Costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Support	66,530.81	22,932.15	89,462.96	99,407.66
Other	0.00	11,511.08	11,511.08	8,757.13
<b>Total resources used</b>	<b>114,908.21</b>	<b>180,144.82</b>	<b>295,053.03</b>	<b>243,645.96</b>
<b>Net Incoming / Outgoing Resources (before transfers)</b>	<b>-47,406.26</b>	<b>-23,417.53</b>	<b>-70,823.79</b>	<b>160,541.74</b>
Fund Transfers In	30,661.69	38,986.59	69,648.28	44,858.25
Fund Transfers Out	0.00	69,648.28	69,648.28	44,858.25
<b>Net Incoming / Outgoing Resources (before gains/losses)</b>	<b>-16,744.57</b>	<b>-54,079.22</b>	<b>-70,823.79</b>	<b>160,541.74</b>
Investment Gains (or Losses)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Net Incoming / Outgoing Resources (before Asset Revaluation)</b>	<b>-16,744.57</b>	<b>-54,079.22</b>	<b>-70,823.79</b>	<b>160,541.74</b>
Asset Revaluation	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Net Movement of Funds</b>	<b>-16,744.57</b>	<b>-54,079.22</b>	<b>-70,823.79</b>	<b>160,541.74</b>
<b>Total Funds Brought Forward</b>	<b>10,156.56</b>	<b>378,977.75</b>	<b>389,134.31</b>	<b>228,592.57</b>
<b>Total Funds Carried Forward</b>	<b>-6,588.01</b>	<b>324,898.53</b>	<b>318,310.52</b>	<b>389,134.31</b>

In 2024, we continued to rely heavily on grant funding to support the majority of our church operations, allowing congregational giving to be directed toward covering the church's core costs. Once again, we were successful in securing grants from both the City and County of Swansea, enabling us to sustain our food ministry, including our popular "Breakfast with Board Games" initiative, which served 1222 breakfasts.

We also received support from Cash for Kids, which allowed us to support families throughout the long summer period. The Austin Bailey Foundation remained one of our most generous supporters, contributing over £14,000 this year.

Despite these successes, our overall income declined in 2024 while expenditure rose, largely due to the use of one-off grants from previous years for major projects like the Community Grocery. A significant portion of our restricted funds—£163,140.47—has been allocated by the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon to support staff recruitment for ministry at St Thomas. However, we have not yet been able to fill these roles. We remain hopeful that the arrival of our new leadership in July 2025 will allow us to move forward with this recruitment.

Our unrestricted general fund continues to show a deficit, as regular giving and donations are currently insufficient to meet the core costs of our ministry. We encourage every member of the church community to prayerfully review their own sacrificial giving and consider whether it might be possible to increase their support to help sustain the essential work of the church.

As always, we are so grateful to all who support the church through generous giving and through the many grants that support our social outreach.

# LOOKING FORWARD: 2025

We look ahead to 2025 with excitement and anticipation, trusting in all that God has planned as we continue to love and serve the community of St Thomas, the wider City of Swansea, and support the mission of the Diocese in our role as a resource church.

We are actively seeking to grow our team through the recruitment of several key roles, including a Student Outreach Pastor, a Children and Families Pastor and an Administrator & Media Lead.

Above all, we remain committed to seeking God's guidance and blessing as we step into the year ahead.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us!

With special thanks to our supporters



## Gratitude and Hope: A Message from the Archdeacon

I want to commend you all for the outstanding work you've done over the past year, particularly as you entered vacancy at the beginning of 2025.

As a unique resource church within our Diocese, St Thomas has demonstrated the remarkable impact a dedicated community can have in serving both the local and wider area. Your commitment—expressed through faithful worship and acts of service—has been truly inspiring.

I am especially grateful for your staff team and Wardens, and moved by the way you continue to support one another in building God's Kingdom in this place.

Looking ahead, I'm delighted to announce the appointment of Owen Gallaher and his wife, Laura. I am confident they will bring fresh energy and blessing to the life and mission of your church.

The coming weeks will be a time of preparation and anticipation as you get ready to welcome your new Vicar. I have no doubt you will rise to the occasion, as you have done so faithfully in the past.

On behalf of the Bishop and the Archdeacon of Gower, thank you—for all you have done, and for all you will continue to do in the days to come.

## Independent Examiner's Report

**To the Trustees of The Parish of St Thomas and Kilvey ANNUAL REPORT 2024** I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of St Thomas and Kilvey charity for the year ended 31st December 2024.

### Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and Examiner

The Parish Council members of the Parish of St Thomas and Kilvey (henceforth referred to as the PCC) as trustees 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 charities 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.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Charities Act;
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Charities Act); and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### 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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- The accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act' or
- The accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- The accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the

Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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: **Daniel Priddy**

Digitally signed by  
Daniel Priddy  
Date: 2025.05.21  
10:46:06 +01'00'

**Date: 21/05/25**

**Name: Mr Daniel Priddy BSc, MA, MCGI**

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