



**Christ Church
Colchester**

Welcome to the Christ Church Annual Report 2025



**“Enabling everyone to enjoy
a living relationship with Jesus”**

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Welcome to the Christ Church 2025 Annual Report

Thank you for who you are and what you do. Over the past year we have continued to enable the people we know and meet to draw closer to Jesus.

When Jesus prayed for his followers in John 17, he said something remarkable. He didn't describe eternal life as simply going to heaven one day, or following a set of religious practices. Instead, he described it as knowing God:

*"Now this is eternal life: that they know you,
the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."*

John 17:3

What a foundation for a church vision.

At the heart of Christ Church is that living call of Jesus - not simply to know *about* Him or to attend church, but to *know* Him personally and walk with Him in everyday life.

The wonderful thing about this vision is that it's for everyone.

It's worth pausing to notice how much of that everyday life we share together: toddler group, lunch club, after school club, youth group, Breakfast Café, to name a few. These aren't add-ons to church life; they are church life. Through them we see friendships formed, faith explored, and lives quietly shaped by the presence of Jesus.

What I love about this vision is that it isn't about church members doing something to people who don't yet come to church. It is a vision for all of us, from the person exploring what following Jesus means, to the person who has walked with Him for ninety years. All of us are still on the way.

I can also see this vision in the harder, quieter places - not just in our worship and outreach, but in the lives of people carrying real weight. Among us are people who have known His forgiveness when they least deserved it, His peace when circumstances offered none, and His presence in grief that didn't resolve quickly or neatly.

Life in Christ Church is not uniformly bright. But the consistent testimony I hear is this: sharing life with Jesus is better.

Looking back on this past year, I'm grateful - genuinely - to be your vicar and to serve alongside you. So much of what happens in the life of this church is possible because people quietly give their time, their energy and their money to serve others.

Looking ahead, I have no idea what the next year holds. I'm certain it will contain both things that delight us and things that test us. My prayer is simply that when both arrive, we find ourselves closer to Jesus in them, through them and because of them.

Revd Chris Smith
Priest-in-Charge

Christ Church Vision

Why does Christ Church exist?

To enable everyone to enjoy a living relationship with Jesus

What makes us Christ Church?

Arms open to all

a Christ-like invitation for anyone to come just as they are and find a warm, safe welcome

Genuine concern

loving each other with the care Jesus shows us

Transformed by faith

we are all on a journey, desiring to be transformed by Jesus

What is most important right now?

Growing our teams

Enhancing all of our teams through prayer and encouragement

Nurture connections

offering our community ways to know and commit to Jesus

Invest in young people

resourcing under 18s ministry and making pathways for young people to be involved in all aspects of church life

What would we do if we weren't limited by resources?

We would help meet people's needs – their spiritual needs, and their physical needs (especially those who are poor or struggling)

Churchwardens' Report 2025

I would like to begin by thanking Jean Taylor and Rod Green for their dedicated service as Churchwardens over the past few years, and Rosemary Currell and Brian Taylor for continuing as Deputy Wardens. I also wish to express my personal gratitude to Chris and Emma and everyone else who have supported me since my election in April.

It has been a privilege to serve Christ Church during the past year. I give thanks to God for His faithfulness and for the commitment of so many who contribute to the worship, mission, and life of the parish.

Chris and Emma continue to lead us here at Christ Church and we give thanks for their encouragement and leadership.

In 2025, we welcomed Rev Jo Jeffery as our new curate and look forward to seeing her ministry grow in the coming years.

Worship and Ministry

Public worship has continued regularly and reverently, supported by clergy, licensed lay ministers, and volunteers. Special thanks to Chris, Emma, Jo, Sara, Clive, Pat, and David for their leadership. "My Story" Sundays have encouraged congregation members to share testimony, strengthening our shared faith.

Our children's and youth ministries, small groups, and pastoral networks continue to provide vital foundations for discipleship and community life. Christ Church remains committed to serving both our congregation and the wider community, with outreach initiatives reflecting our desire to welcome and invite others.

Leadership and Stewardship

The PCC will continue to reflect on priorities, capacity, and the wise stewardship of resources to ensure our activities align with Christ Church's calling.

The church building and facilities have been well maintained, with routine maintenance and compliance matters addressed. Thanks go to those working behind the scenes to keep our buildings safe and functional.

Safeguarding and Administration

Safeguarding continues to be a priority, and we thank Simon, James and Sophie Bacon, our Parish Safeguarding Officers, for ensuring policies are followed and regularly reviewed. Emily Gooch, our Church Administrator, ensures the smooth running of the office and communications.

Finance

Thanks to Nigel, our Treasurer, for careful financial oversight, and to all who give faithfully to support the ministry and mission of the church.

Volunteers

Finally, thanks to all volunteers who serve Christ Church in visible and unseen ways—from music to flower arranging, tech, leading children’s and young people’s groups, delivering communion in local homes, pastoral work, prayer ministry, cleaning, gardening, and hospitality. The life of our parish depends on your faithful and generous service.

As we look ahead, we do so with trust in God’s continued provision and guidance. My prayer is that Christ Church remains faithful in worship, steadfast in service, and attentive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in the year to come.

Parochial Church Council (PCC)

The PCC, in co-operation with the incumbent, oversees the whole mission of the Church—pastoral, evangelical, social, and ecumenical. Members meet every two months, with additional meetings as required.

PCC Members 2025

- **Incumbent:** Rev Chris Smith
- **Curates:** Rev Emma Smith, Rev Jo Jeffery
- **Reader/LLM:** Sara Humphreys, Clive Joyce
- **Churchwardens:** Jean Taylor (until April 2025), Rod Green (until April 2025), Paul Wakefield (from April 2025)

- **Deputy Churchwardens:** Rosemary Currell, Brian Taylor
- **Deanery Synod Reps:** Alan Drew, Clive Joyce
- **Elected Members:** Anna Bailey, Kate Clifton (from April 2025), Judith Cronshaw (until April 2025), Alan Drew, Sheila Godwin (until April 2025), Rod Green, Nigel Humphreys (Hon Treasurer), Julia Nelson (from April 2025), Simon Prestney, Marion Saunders, Tim Wakefield

Working Groups

Nurture, Mission & Outreach, Service, Families & Young People, and Premises groups focus on their areas and report to the PCC. All are represented in the Ministry Leadership Team (MLT), providing coordinated oversight of the church's spiritual life.

Paul Wakefield

Electoral Roll as at end April 2026

There are currently 81 names on the electoral roll. 1 person has died and 2 new people have been added.

David Lankshear
Electoral Roll officer.

Volunteering and Safeguarding Report 2025

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy, Christ Church is committed to promoting a safe environment and culture, and to safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church. We have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), Simon Prestney, a Recruiter, Beth Wakefield and along with our Priest in Charge, Rev Chris Smith this

represents the Action Group accountable to PCC to implement policy and procedures as a sub-committee of PCC.

Significant work has been completed over the year relating to DBS and Safeguarding training appropriate to each paid and volunteer role, to ensure we meet Bishops Council guidance, for those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Updates to PCC for Volunteering and Safeguarding have been provided routinely throughout the year and there is a regular slot on PCC for safeguarding discussion and issues to be raised. During the year PCC completed a session dedicated to safeguarding, reflecting on the new Parish Safeguarding Quality Assurance Framework in small group sessions and the PCC ratified the House of Bishops Guidance. Relevant policies were signed as part of the annual cycle. The audit focuses on:

- Culture, leadership and capacity
- Prevention
- Recognising, assessing and managing risk
- Victims and survivors
- Learning, supervision and support

Across the year since the last APCM the Church of England has continued to deal with high profile abuse cases and this has had ramifications right through the structure of safeguarding. The Diocese has introduced more engagement sessions with PSO', recruiters and incumbents relating to Safeguarding and been open and honest about the challenges we need to work through.

We have updated our approach to volunteering with role descriptions, risk assessments, and a review of safer recruitment and an audit of our recruitment areas. This has meant we are asking our volunteers to complete things that they haven't done before, but are an essential part of meeting the current requirements of the Church of England and aligns to our commitment as PCC to the House of Bishops Guidance. We have tried to be smart in our approach and simplify things. This has mainly been achieved by

manipulating the Church Suite system to allow everything to be completed digitally and offering to come alongside anyone who needs support for this.

A reminder that if you have the slightest doubt about any situation that you are encouraged to come forward to Simon or Chris to discuss it in confidence. Sometimes lots of small items of feedback or concern match up to an overall picture of a situation. Please do not feel you need to carry or hold anything individually as safeguarding is a collective effort as a congregation to ensure we stay the safest environment.

Finally, I would like to close in a personal thanks, echoed on behalf of the PCC, to the amazing volunteers we have who are giving of their time to nurture the Christian Faith across the Mission and Ministry of Christ Church. The rich vibrancy of our children's and young people's activities, and the 'not-so-young' too, happens because of the willingness of people to work through safer recruitment (however frustrating it is!!) and turn up day in day out, week in week out to share gifts, skills and experiences. You are hugely valued as volunteers of Christ's work at Christ Church, and we are very grateful for everything you do.

Simon Prestney

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Beth Wakefield

Volunteering Recruiter

Rev Chris Smith

Priest in charge

Christ Church Premises Report 2025

2025 was the first full year of the new PCC Premises Management Group. Our role is to look after the Christ Church building and its grounds, including managing bookings for both Church and community use; organising the cleaning, caretaking and gardening; paying insurances and utilities; maintaining and improving the building fabric, services and equipment.

Each member of the group has a lead role:

- Judith Cronshaw – group co-ordinator, finance and capital projects
- Brian Taylor – building maintenance, contractors and utilities
- Martin Nelson and Bradley Powell – cleaning and waste
- Carolyn Munson – grounds maintenance
- Jean Taylor – bookings, hirers and security
- Rod Green – insurance
- Simon Prestney – health and safety

The premises group relies on additional volunteers to ‘spread the workload’, particularly when it comes to the day-to-day running of the building.

Members of the group always welcome new offers of help in any area. A big thank you to everyone who has volunteered in 2025.

With careful management of our resources, the income from groups hiring the building pays for ‘normal’ premises running costs, although the increase in utility costs this year has been a challenge. Any significant maintenance costs or capital improvements are funded by specific fundraising. In 2025 these included, heating and drainage repairs, refurbishment of the meeting room and the new path between the car park and Cambridge Walk.

A new contract cleaner, Total Clean in support of St Helena Hospice, was appointed in September (Profit from Total Clean goes directly to St Helena). The increased cleaning has reduced the pressure on our reduced number of Saturday volunteer cleaners, but the additional cost will put a strain on the Premises budget in 2026.

Judith Cronshaw, Christ Church Premises Management Group

Treasurer's Report - 2025 Accounts

The accounts for the calendar year 2025 are submitted to the APCM.

Important points to note are:

General Fund Receipts and Payments

This shows income and expenditure for general Parish purposes.

- We received £121,434 in total in 2025 (mostly as usual from donations), compared with £110,551 in 2024.
- We spent £129,553, compared with £106,576 in 2024.

Our income was thus £10,883 greater than in the previous year. Donations remained steady, while income from Church lettings increased by some £12,000, reflecting the fact that 2025 was our first full year of lettings income, following the closure of the Joint Council in July 2024.

Our expenditure also increased, by £22,977. In addition to general inflationary rises this reflects:

- Our first full year of payments for utilities, cleaning and maintenance, which were previously met from Joint Council funds;
- Exceptional expenditure of £6,500 on building repairs and upkeep of the Church grounds;
- An increase in governance costs following our decision to appoint an external examiner on a commercial basis.

We had budgeted to break even over the year (with a nominal surplus of £13), but in the event our expenses exceeded our income by £8,119. This is due mainly to having underestimated the cost of maintaining the Church premises (which we previously shared with the Joint Council), and an unexpected contribution of some £2,500 needed to complete our new Building works.

Fund Movement by type

This shows income and expenditure relating to funds set aside for special purposes.

There was predicted movement in our Restricted Building Fund as we completed the major stage of our new building project during the year. Fundraising has however continued to install solar panels and a covered bicycle store when funds allow.

Small amounts remaining in our Home Mission and Rose Bible funds were spent during the year.

A new fund was set up for a generous donation we received to meet the cost of updating our audio-visual equipment – this work is continuing. We also received a grant of £1,000 to help fund the cost of our Holidays at Home project.

Balance Sheet

This shows our capital assets as of 31 December 2025, and where they were held. Our total funds were £57,736, compared with £72,574 at December 2024.

Our general fund balance of £47,832 closely matches our policy to retain general fund capital reserves of at least 50% of budgeted expenditure for the current year ($£101,811 \times 50\% = £50,900$). We have budgeted to improve this in 2026 by making a surplus of approximately £11,000.

Thanks and acknowledgements

I would like to record my grateful thanks to Emily Gooch for her careful and conscientious work in keeping our accounts up to date.

Thanks also to our Project fundraising teams, to Church members and friends who have donated so generously to our improvement projects for the Church, and to Church Wardens, Deputy Church Wardens, and leaders of Church groups and activities for their prudence and generosity, which has enabled us to complete the year in a sound financial position.

I formally submit the 2025 accounts to the APCM for approval.

Nigel Humphreys, Hon Treasurer

Receipts and Payments Account – General Fund

Income	2025	2024
Donations and legacies		
Parish Giving Scheme	61,360	64,856
Regular Gift Aid Giving	7,513	5,768
Contactless giving	3,684	2,666
Non gift aid giving	13,306	8,948
Sunday cash collections	818	50
Other cash collections	1,104	1,797
One-off Gift Aid gifts	700	3,025
Tax recoverable from HMRC	3,005	3,769
Legacies	3,000	5,350
Non-recurring one-off grants	1,500	1,367
Fundraising events	137	-
<i>Total Donations and legacies</i>	<i>96,127</i>	<i>97,609</i>
Income from charitable activities		
Wedding and funeral fees	321	54
Photocopying and Printing	52	-
<i>Total Income from charitable activities</i>	<i>373</i>	<i>54</i>
Other trading activities		
Church lettings - regular	18,011	5,678
Church lettings - occasional	1,350	1,610
<i>Total Other trading activities</i>	<i>19,361</i>	<i>7,288</i>
Investments		
Dividends	1,146	1,313
Bank interest	130	235
<i>Total Investments</i>	<i>1,275</i>	<i>1,548</i>
Other income		
Maintenance contributions	-	1,198
St Botolph's contributions	4,298	2,571
Refunds	-	280
<i>Total Other income</i>	<i>4,298</i>	<i>4,050</i>
Total Income	121,434	110,551

Expenditure	2025	2024
Raising funds		
Costs of fundraising events	761	-
Cost of contactless collection	257	599
<i>Total Expenditure on Raising funds</i>	<i>1,018</i>	<i>599</i>
Expenditure on charitable activities		
Home Mission donations	22	-
Secular charity donations	250	542
Parish share	73,220	71,826
Tax and NI	643	71
Parish administrator's salary	12,224	10,381
Working expenses of clergy	2,275	2,938
Parsonage house expenses	-	0
Training	179	304
Cost of Parish activities	2,905	1,484
Books & teaching materials	311	371
Non fundraising events	478	753
Newsletters, cards etc	733	845
Building maintenance	5,915	4,995
Building insurance	1,513	854
Church office - telephone	1,040	989
Church office - stationery	637	540
Bank charges	60	133
Computer expenses	1,538	845
Sound and projection	168	-
Office equipment	254	462
Other maintenance costs	-	465
Clearing	5,727	1,615
Upkeep of services	119	58
Music ministry	926	843
Altar requisites	332	195
Upkeep of church grounds	3,210	-
Photocopying and printing	1,268	1,546
Miscellaneous	39	1,220
Utilities	8,000	1,532
Governance costs	1,260	59
Building major repairs	3,290	-
New building Church	-	100
<i>Total Expenditure on charitable activities</i>	<i>128,535</i>	<i>105,977</i>
Total Expenditure	129,553	106,576

Excess of Income over Expenditure	(8,119)	3,975
Unrealised gain in investment value	437	4,704
Brought forward balance	60,956	21,713
Transfers to/(from)	(5,442)	30,564
Carried forward balance	47,832	60,956

Fund movement by type

	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Gains/Losses	Journals	Closing
Audio Visual							
Restricted	-	10,000	2,472	-	-	-	7,528
Sub-totals	-	10,000	2,472	-	-	-	7,528
Building							
Restricted	11,436	7,848	22,350	5,443	-	-	2,376
Sub-totals	11,436	7,848	22,350	5,442	-	-	2,376
Holidays at Home							
Restricted	-	1,000	1,000	-	-	-	-
Sub-totals	-	1,000	1,000	-	-	-	-
Home Mission							
Restricted	141	-	141	-	-	-	-
Sub-totals	141	-	141	-	-	-	-
Rose Bible							
Restricted	40	-	40	-	-	-	-
General							
Unrestricted	60,956	121,434	129,553	(5,442)	437	-	47,832
Sub-totals	60,956	121,434	129,553	(5,442)	437	-	47,832
Totals	72,575	140,282	155,557	-	437	-	57,736

Balance Sheet (Summary)

	As at 31/12/2025	As at 31/12/2024
Current assets		
Investments	20,929	37,038
Cash At Bank and In Hand	36,893	35,344
	57,922	72,383
Liabilities		
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due in One Year	(186)	(191)
	(186)	(191)
Net current assets less current liabilities	57,736	72,574
Total assets less current liabilities	57,736	72,574
Liabilities		
	-	-
Total net assets less liabilities	57,736	72,574
Represented by		
Unrestricted		
Unrestricted - General Funds	47,832	60,956
Designated		
Designated - Building Fund	-	-
Restricted		
Restricted - Audio Visual System	7,528	-
Restricted - Building Fund	2,376	11,435
Restricted - Home Mission Fund	-	141
Restricted - Rose Bible Fund	-	40
Fund Totals	57,736	72,574

Note:

Fixed Assets

In addition to the financial assets above the PCC owns the Communion Plate with an insurance value of £33,000 and office equipment with an estimated value of £8,000.

These accounts were approved by the Trustees on

19th April 2026

and signed on their behalf by:



Rev. C. Smith



N. Humphreys (Treasurer)

Independent examiner's statement

Report to the trustees of

Christ Church Colchester

On accounts for the year ended

31 December 2025

Set out on pages

2 to 5

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year ended 31 December 2025.

As the Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed 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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed:



Date:

27/04/2026

Name:

Jacqueline Frost

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

ACA

Address:

TC Group

11 De Grey Square

De Grey Road

Colchester

Essex CO4 5YQ

Mission and Outreach

The mission and outreach group meets a few times throughout the year. The group consists of Paul Wakefield (lead), Chris Smith, Judith Cronshaw and Sue Bennett.

The highlight of the year were the performances of the Noah mystery play. Many thanks go to Rod and Sara Green for their superb writing and directing of this play. It was certainly enjoyed by all those who performed in and watched it.

We continue to talk and pray about Christ Church and its on-going mission to the parish and wider community. We have looked at running outreach courses (more to come in 2026) and have held a couple of successful community curry evenings.

The group has also looked at signage within and outside the Church building to make known more to the community what the Church offers.

Paul Wakefield - March 2026

Families' and Young People Group

Members: Deb Arneaud (from September 2025), Sue Bennett, Ramona Bond (from September 2025), Alan Drew, Sheila Godwin (until July 2025), Chris Smith, Emma Smith, Katherine Wakefield,

In the autumn we welcomed Deb and Ramona having taken on the leadership of Time Together and said thankyou to Sheila for her many years leading TT.

The group has meetings every couple of months and we discuss / pray on any needs, concerns or joys coming from our F&YP groups (Breakfast Café, FLAMES , FROG, Holiday Club, Lightbulb, Splodgy, Time Together, schools work). We were grateful to the deanery for a grant towards the

running costs of holiday club in 2025 and are thankful for a further donation towards 2026's club where we will be "going into space".

Katherine Wakefield

The Nurture Group during 2025

The Nurture and Discipleship Group is one of the working groups of the PCC. It has responsibility for discipleship – our daily and life-long journey of following Jesus and growing mature in our Christian faith – and for the spiritual growth of the Church family, and the individuals within it.

The Group aims to provide opportunities for people at Christ Church to grow in their discipleship and to explore and deepen their Christian faith.

In 2025, the Group met about every two months, and worked to offer these things:

- Daily Bible Reading: A focus on Daily Bible reading, in a PCC meeting, and then in a Café Worship and later in the year a Morning Worship;
- The well-liked "Little Book of Lent" for personal devotion in Lent;
- Teaching: A teaching series on Sunday evenings on Holy Communion;
- A focus on the story of Cornelius in Acts 10 and 11, in a Sunday Morning Service and a Story Evening study and discussion;
- Library: New materials for the Children's Library, and new books for a "Youth" Section in the main Library;
- Two books for Advent, "The Little Book of Advent" and Bishop Guli's "Listening to the Music of the Soul" which was much appreciated by those who read it;

- Quiet Day / Retreat: Our Advent Quiet Day, led in 2025 by David Lankshear “On the Way” focussing on the stories of three very different and influential Christians at times of great change;
- A start on shaping the new Outreach/Nurture discussion evenings which we hope will draw in enquirers, and nurture existing Christ Church people, in 2026.

Who is in this Group? Revd Chris Smith, Judith Budge, Sara Humphreys, Clive Joyce and Marion Saunders. Since the end of 2025, Anne Wirima has joined us and is a very welcome new member of this Group.

Your role in Nurturing...

We would welcome additional members in the Nurture Group. Do please speak to any one of us. No commitment follows from enquiring!

And – what is it that you would find useful, personally, in your discipleship? Or in exploring the Christian faith? We would love to hear from you!

February 2026

Service and Hospitality Group

(Anna Bailey, Delia Bloom, Roger Ennals, Sheila Godwin, Tony Joyce, Clare Lankshear)

It was good to welcome Toni Joyce to the team in January.

Appeals

During Lent we collected tools and money for Tools With a Mission (TWAM) ... we had a good response, £102.17 plus a carload of tools delivered to TWAM.

In March a coffee morning and Fairtrade stall raised £250 for Transform Trade and at Harvest we supported Colchester Foodbank.

Thy Kingdom Come(TKC)

2025 marked the 10th anniversary of TKC. The focus was the Lord's Prayer, there were excellent resources available both a prayer journal and a Novena to encourage people to pray, during the period from Ascension Day to Pentecost, for 5 people to come to know Jesus.

Both Pastoral Groups and Lifts to church have been reviewed regularly and amended accordingly.

Outreach in Crouch Street during Holy Week and before Christmas....this was once again well received by passers-by as was the Carol singing that took place at Lancer House, Maldon Court, the Oaks Care Home and Parsley House. Many thanks to all who supported these services.

We have continued to prayerwalk once a month..... a lovely opportunity to pray for our parish and those who live and work there.

Sheila Godwin

Gardening group Annual Report 2025

We continued to meet on occasional Saturdays and are grateful for the regular help of those who come to work and picnic together. Thanks also to those who cut the grass regularly.

We have extended our tiny veg bed, following a pilot planting of tomatoes and beans last year. We hope the Guides may be involved with planting and watering this year, and the produce will be enjoyed by more people! The large Acacia near the sheds was sadly found to be rotten in the autumn and was felled leaving a 3m stump.

The Big Garden Bird Survey was completed in January; results are on the Eco board. We held seasonal garden produce stalls and a gardening stall at the Bazaar.

Next Gardening Date: March 28th 2026

Kate Clifton

Eco-Church Annual Report March 2025

As a Gold Eco Church we have responsibility to uphold the highest standards of sustainability and act as an example and resource to the community and other churches, as stewards of God's Creation. We celebrated Creationtide last October with a service led by David Beales, as well as having material in the Chapel for prayer and reflection at the time of COP 30. We also continued our own journey towards CNZ (Carbon net Zero) and sustainability.

CNZ

In the last year we have made progress towards installing solar panels and a battery system at the the church, and are now ready to find funding as we have quotes for the system we would like to see in place.

Acting as an example and resource for sustainability

We share ideas and sustainable practices through our lifestyles and community example on a daily basis, both as individuals and a church. Environmental advocacy with other Colchester churches continues through the diocesan network, so that Colchester Deanery now has more than 50% of its churches engaged with Eco Church. We are also participating in assessment of other Gold Eco Church applications nationally.

In 2025 we became a Community Garden Twinning Partner, supporting small farmers to be more self sufficient and climate resilient in East and Central African countries. Our 'Lifestyle Survey' exploring individual choices and sustainability was completed in October, results were shared for the third year. Unfinished business - We have yet to install a cycle rack for church users.

Kate Clifton

Time Together

Time Together takes place on Tuesday mornings from 10 am till 12pm during term time, and is run by myself and Debbie Arnaud.

We offer a relaxed environment where parents and careers can bring their babies and toddlers, Time Together is open to 0 – 4 year olds.

There are plenty of refreshments and sometimes cake. There are crafts to do and plenty of age appropriate toys for the children to play with, we always finish with a bible story and some fun songs.

We have a wonderful group of helpers who help with refreshments, tech, register, craft and setting up in the morning, we have about fifteen families who regularly attend weekly but would always love to see more people through the door as it is such a warm and friendly group and have often had great feedback from the parents and children themselves.

Ramona Collinson, Debbie Arnaud.

FROGS

A very busy year of Frogs. New people, good community atmosphere
We continue to spread the message of Gods light and love for everyone.
A very busy, noisy but comfortable place to be for all those who come
Tuesday after school.

Sue Bennett

Breakfast Café

Another good year at the breakfast cafe with several new faces.
The cafe now runs every Thursday (the Art Society having moved their
Meetings to the afternoon.)

A very welcome community space for all who come. Spread the word.
Every Thursday 8.45 to 11.30 (drop in for as little or as long as you like)
Try it!!

Sue Bennett



FLAMES Sunday School in 2025

FLAMES (“Fun Learning And More Every Sunday”) meets every Sunday during term time (except 4th Sunday Café Church). We are the Primary-School-age children of Christ Church (and its visitors!) and a group of 5 leaders and 6 helpers. In the words of one of our young members, “We learn about Jesus and we have fun.”

We do learn about Jesus, and we aim to use Bible stories from the Old Testament too. We have used Scripture Union materials quite a bit, but having picked the theme of “Encounter” for Autumn 2025, a number of our sessions have been “home grown” as we have followed the experiences of Bible characters who had close encounters with God, not all of whom were covered by Scripture Union.

In 2025 we started to introduce a song which we have used most weeks.

We have a variable number of young people attending, usually between around six and twelve, with more on some Sundays. One or two of our secondary-age young people often join the group and we really appreciate the help and encouragement they give. Leaders work hard to prepare our sessions, but the time spent together is always really valuable and enjoyable for us all.

Many thanks to everyone who helps with FLAMES. And we don’t yet have too many helpers or leaders; do speak to any of us if you are interested in finding out more about this lovely ministry!

Revd Emma Smith, Katherine Wakefield, Tim Wakefield, Deb Arneaud, Sara Humphreys; with Clare Lankshear, Judith Budge, Judith Cronshaw, Marion Saunders, Michelle Prestney, Simon Prestney.

Splodgy Youth

Splodgy Youth runs every other Friday evening during school term time from 7:30pm to 9pm and is aimed at those in school years 6 and above. Thanks to Alan, Kate and Michelle who regularly help us along with others who help occasionally.

The evenings consist of a range of activities – games (badminton and volleyball), board and card games, a “chill-out” area and crafts. We sometimes utilise the kitchen to make pizzas, toasted sandwiches, ice cream treats and these are always very popular. We end the evening with a short video and brief discussion time and we finish with a prayer.

We have about 20 young people attending from several different primary and secondary schools in the area.

This year, we have been providing lifts to one young person who would otherwise not be able to come to Splodgy. This young person really benefits from the time at Splodgy. Thankyou to Sara, Clare, Sheila and Kate for providing the lifts.

Although we do have a soft approach to Evangelism at Splodgy we have been encouraged by the interest that some of our young people have begun to show, this was shown by the invaluable help offered by several of our young people acting as very capable and enthusiastic young leaders at our Summer Holiday Club. We hope this will be repeated again this year.

As always, we could always benefit from additional helpers whether on a regular or occasional basis. Please get in touch if you'd like to find out more.

*Paul and Katherine
Wakefield - March 2026*



Lightbulbs

Lightbulb runs on the alternate Fridays from Splodgy and we meet in the Church library. It is a quiet(ish) and more discussion based, discipleship evening and is open to those in school years 6 and above.

The group is led by Katherine, Sheila and Paul and is attended by Alice, George and Naomi. We look at topics in more depth than at Splodgy and each evening we have very good chats and discussions, as well as some “silly” games or ice breaker activities. The young people are very open to sharing their thoughts and quite often we have some in-depth, challenging conversations.

Paul & Katherine Wakefield, Sheila Godwin - March 2026

Support in Loss

Outreach to the community through SILS, Holiday Club and Lunch Club While this report started as one related to the Support in Loss group, in fact there is a cross over with some of the other events Christ Church has supported in outreach to the community during this last year, with one often leading in to the other.

The Support in Loss group has continued to meet monthly on the fourth Friday of the month, in the Library. It is led by Dr Elizabeth Hall, Gordon Rodgers and Rev Pat Prestney. While this is an informal meeting, which we do not advertise as in any way being a counselling session, the support that attendees offer one another has been a means of working through, together, the ups and downs of the journey through bereavement. It is available to anyone of any faith or none, and we have covered such things as what do with ashes, coping with family members as they grieve in different ways, celebrating anniversaries, how to cope with the empty house when you close the door at the end of an evening out and there is no one to share the events of the day with, how to manage caring for ourselves, eating alone, coping with our own ill health. Numbers vary as people are

encouraged to come for as long as it is helpful to be there, but to feel no pressure to continue if they are ready to move on.

Immediately after Christmas we meet for a shared meal, one we prepare together, and this is where the cross over with other out-reach events begins to happen, as this has attracted folk who come along to the monthly lunch and activities club, and who may not be in the early stages of grief but who may well find themselves on their own as families go back to their own lives after the festive season. This year we had about 25 people sitting down for a roast pork dinner, followed by Christmas pudding!!

Linked in with all this too has been the Holidays at Home venture, which has run for the second year, for 5 days in August. This is planned for our older generation, many of whom are no longer able to take holidays away. After a morning of craft activities, they are served a two course lunch and then entertainment of various kinds, from 'Elvis' to 'Mary Poppins' to the 'Pearly King and Queen', fills the afternoon. The team who help run this, Sheila Godwin, Sara Humphreys, Rosemary Currell and Anna Bailey do a wonderful job and the donations that come in are a mark of how much this is appreciated.

Following the success of this, and as a new venture this year, Katherine Wakefield and I both heard the call at the same time, but totally independently, to provide a monthly activities and lunch club, the first of which took place in October 2025. It is perhaps still early to assess the effectiveness of this, but for the 30+ folk who are attending each month it does seem to be providing a real meeting place and certainly meeting a need for fellowship and friendship. Some folk are from our church, others from the wider community. All but one of our bereavement folk attend this and conversely some people have come along to the Support in Loss group because of coming to the lunch club. And some even attended the curry night, which is why I say there is a cross over of one group to the other.

For me, this is why we put all the effort we did into improving the Christ Church building, so that we could better serve our community and

demonstrate the love of Christ in practical service and so fulfil the commands to love the Lord our God and love our neighbours.

Pat Prestney



Good Friday Workshop

Lovely morning making our Easter Garden ,lots of Easter and Good Friday crafts to take. Wonderful to see so many of our weekday church at the event.

Sue Bennett

Christingle

What a wonderful afternoon ,All that the church would want it to be. Crafts etc and culminating in a time of quiet with lit candles in the Oranges (And no we didn't set fire to anyone!!). Ending with letting our light shine in our lives.

Sue Bennet

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**We would love to hear from you whether it is
about an important life event or just to say hello**

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