

Holy Trinity Headington Quarry

REPORTS ON CHURCH ACTIVITIES
January – December 2024



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Overall Governance

PCC

This year was notable for two reasons. First, the long-awaited church building project was completed in September. The PCC is very grateful to all who made it possible, in big and small ways, for the church extension to be completed. Second, Revd Dr Laura Biron-Scott stepped down as Vicar of Holy Trinity Headington Quarry at the end of November to become Chaplain of Balliol College. The PCC is deeply appreciative of all of the leadership and other gifts (including excellent project management of the building project) that Laura gave to the parish during her five years at Holy Trinity.

The PCC met in person six times in 2024. Five of these meetings were regular PCC meetings – in February, May, July, September and November. The sixth meeting, in December, was an extraordinary meeting under Section 11 of the vacancy process.

The PCC passed the following resolutions:

- To fit bifold doors between the vestry and meeting room pending confirmation of available funds and further discussion with the architect and structural engineer (NB: Further discussion concluded that it would not be appropriate to fit bifold doors; the original design was retained.)
- To submit an application for the commission and installation of a memorial bench in the churchyard, with all costs to be met by the family of David Prince.
- To approve expenditure on a Legilium microphone for a total cost to the PCC of £646. (This is to complement a wider update of the sound system with costs of approximately £5,000 being generously donated by members of the congregation.)
- To replace the grill behind the Narnia window with a polycarbonate sheet that would continue to protect the window from the meeting room side.
- To dissolve the Jackson Trust and incorporate the operations of the Coach House and the Jackson Fund under its administration.
- To appoint Margaret Taylor and Linda Davies to act as the PCC's representatives in connection with the selection of an Incumbent.

Throughout 2024, three new PCC working groups began operating actively:

- The 175th anniversary group planned and led a series of excellent events to celebrate Holy Trinity's 175th anniversary. Most notable of these was the open weekend on 14–15 September to celebrate both the anniversary and the

completion of the church extension. Approximately 250 visitors came into the church on Saturday and over 30 on Sunday afternoon. The HTHQ175 Talking History series of monthly talks began in the autumn and will continue into 2025.

- The sustainable heating group developed proposals for decarbonising the heating system in the church, in consultation with external experts including Matt Fulford from Inspired Efficiency. These proposals will continue to be refined and considered by the PCC in the coming year.
- The finance strategy group was established to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of Holy Trinity. A key plan developed by the group was to hold a generous giving campaign during Lent 2025, to encourage members of the congregation to give regularly (and to use the Parish Giving Scheme to do so, where possible).

Other PCC groups continued to meet regularly and brought items to PCC meetings for consideration as appropriate.

The APCM was held in the church in May. The membership of the PCC underwent some changes. Janet Masters stood down as churchwarden and Linda Davies was elected in her place. Yue-Yi Hwa stood down as deanery rep and Diane Mason was elected to fill this casual vacancy in the remaining 2023–2026 deanery synod term. Dominic Vickers and Nick Rollin stood down from the PCC. Diana Harrison and Frances Farrar were re-elected to the PCC. Richard Carling and Yue-Yi Hwa were also elected. All those who stood down were warmly thanked for all they had contributed over their tenure.

Yue-Yi Hwa
Secretary to the PCC

Church Wardens

The past year has been a mixture of joy and sadness. Joy because our new extension was finally completed and sadness because our vicar Rev. Laura Biron-Scott moved on to be Chaplain of Balliol College, Oxford in November. We have so much to thank Laura for, as she has left us the legacy of the new building which she worked tirelessly for on everything to do with building and any financial help we could get. Added to which, she continued to help us all on our journey of faith together. Laura was duly thanked after her last service and presented with tokens of gratitude including a “hard hat”. We wish her well in her new post. We entered into an interregnum as Christmas approached.

Our long awaited extension was finished in September, and it is amazing how well it has all blended in with the existing interior. We do still have one or two snagging items to be done. The toilet was the biggest challenge because it kept going wrong and even flooded the floor on our open day. That has now been sorted, as that is an important asset to the building, as is the kitchen which has all that we need. It was important that we showcased to the community what we had achieved, as they had some disruption to deal with as well. We held an open day with displays around the church as to the history and surroundings in Quarry. It was very well attended and the Bishop blessed the new extension at a confirmation service the next day.

We have space at the west end of the church now that the Font has been moved further back. This in turn means we can now meet for coffee after church and provide a hospitality area. The meeting room now means we can hold PCC meetings and group gatherings in there.

The inventory is still not quite complete because, not all of the property is back in situ. This will be possible when the joinery is completed at the back of the church giving us cupboards for storage. This we hope will be completed by the end of 2025.

The Madonna and Child statue is now back in place after repair. The diocese is also being consulted over the removal of the gridding covering the "Narnia Window" and protecting it with a polycarbonate backing.

A health and safety review highlighted that, the step into the Lady Chapel and the step in the vestry to the meeting room needed to be marked with a visible strip to alert people of the potential hazard.

Services continued throughout the whole of the building process even in the very cold weather. Kingerlee, the builders, were very accommodating making everything safe and as tidy as possible for Sunday services and stopping work for a short while for mid-week services or any funerals in church.

The churchyard saw some disruption during the building process with the path being closed to Quarry Road during the day, and was fenced off to the public. The graves that were nearby were duly protected and covered and some curbing safely removed. After the completion they were all restored as they were. Kingerlee were very aware this was a sensitive issue and worked with us accordingly. The gardener continued to cut the grass at this time and continues to do so, keeping the churchyard looking cared for and welcoming. Susan Houlton continues to look after the flower beds and unattended graves each week and we are very grateful for her work. There are three trees which need to be felled in the future.

The Coach House committee, with the clergy as chair, have continued to look after and maintain the building as much as possible. Adrian Wood has been looking after the bookings and checking the building each day which has helped tremendously. There are a steady group of regular users. The floor was sanded and re-varnished in the autumn, and some smaller maintenance carried out. It is hoped in the future that all this will come under the church administration rather than a separate body. The car

park was used as the building yard up until September, but it did not deter from the use of the building as it was duly fenced off.

There are so many volunteers who gave their time and energy while all the building was going on. The cleaners worked hard to get the church tidy for Sundays wrestling with dust and dirty floors. The flower arrangers still made sure there was colour in the building providing that cared for look in sometimes difficult times. We would like to thank all who have contributed each week to the services. The welcomers, those providing coffee, bell ringing, chalice bearers, readers and others attending to all those little unseen jobs which helped us to get successfully through the "Year of the Build" We are so blessed to now have this extra space to "be an open door between heaven and earth showing Gods love to all" Thank You everyone

Margaret Taylor Linda Davies.

Electoral Roll report

The church of England Representation Rules require a completely new Electoral Roll to be made every six years, and this had to be done this year. It was decided to contact everyone on the current roll to remind them to re-apply. Where email addresses had been given emails were sent, otherwise a printed letter was hand delivered, except to a few addresses further away which were posted.

Of the 176 on the old roll, 30 have not replied. Some have replied informing me that they no longer attend Holy Trinity, or that the person has died.

We have received 18 new applications not on the old roll, which is more than we usually receive in a revision year. One of these is a person under 16 years old, who will be added on their 16th birthday.

The new roll totals 144

Of which 90

Reside within the parish boundaries,

And 54 outside

[about one-third, which is the usual ratio]

Joan Jones Electoral Roll Officer

Children and youth

Children & Families ministry

We are thankful for all those who give their time and talents to support children's work in the parish. The Children and Families sub-committee met three times in 2024, looking to the 'big picture' of our ministry and joining up plans for future endeavours. This also allowed us to fit in special events, such as a Taylor Swift party in the summer and gingerbread decorating in December.

All-Age services

Seven All-Age Eucharist services took place in 2024, celebrating Candlemas, Mothering Sunday, Easter Sunday, Pentecost, Harvest, a Nativity service, and Christmas Day. Children and young people were involved in a number of ways, including serving and welcoming, writing and delivering prayers, and performing the readings. We also held two Christingle services on Christmas Eve which filled the church to capacity with families from the wider community.

Forest Sunday School

In 2024, Forest Sunday School continued each week during the 10am Sunday services.

When the building work finished in the autumn, the front pews began to be reserved for families because the children can see what is happening in the service better from here.

One other change in 2024 was that when it rained or was cold, we were able to use the new Meeting Room instead of the woodland. As the walls are thick, the sound doesn't carry as much as it might and this has worked out well.

It's a great team that leads and helps out with Forest Sunday School and it's such a pleasure to be able to welcome children and families to these sessions.

11+/Empowered group

This year saw the launch of a new group aimed at young people aged 11-16. Our pilot sessions in the summer focussed on exploring faith and well-being from the perspective of young women (who made up the group). In the autumn term, the group met for a further six sessions exploring climate justice and organised a bake sale to raise money for WWF and eco projects at Holy Trinity. This group now meets for a block of six weeks once a term and has 7-8 regular members. The project runs jointly with the United Reformed Church at Collinwood Road in Risinghurst, and uses their Coffee Lounge for meetings.

Quarry Foundation School

The school continue to use the Vicarage Wood for forest school, which provides another important source of connection between school and church. With the move of the Rainbow Group back to St Andrew's, we welcomed the nursery class for the first time for their Nativity service.

Pre-school age provision

Over the course of 2024, we experimented with different formats for our tots provision, trialling a new 'Stay and Play' format which offered a space for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers (and their carers) to play together and complete craft activities, before offering a Bible Story and prayers for those who wish to stay. Whilst appreciated by those who came, numbers for this endeavour remained small and so, after a time of prayerful discernment, the team decided to open out this Tuesday morning slot into an intergenerational space, combining a Community Café with dedicated space and toys for pre-school children to come with their adults.

Confirmation/Baptism

Due to the building work, we only baptised one child in 2024, though this has already picked back up to usual levels; however, we were greatly blessed to have eight young people put themselves forward for Confirmation. We met together over the summer and all eight were confirmed by the Bishop of Oxford on Sunday 15 September.

Good Friday Craft Morning

We held our traditional craft morning for families in the Coach House on Good Friday. found out about Holy Week and made key chains with coloured beads to help them remember key events; made Easter gardens and chocolate nests; wrote prayers for the big cross; took part in some collaborative artwork and followed the egg trail in the woods.

Narnia Trail

It was lovely to welcome more than 80 children with their families to follow the Narnia Trail as part of the 175th birthday celebrations in the autumn. They entered the woods through a real wardrobe and came across figures from Narnia there (including snow and a lamp post). There was a quiz to answer as they went round and in the Coach House they made crowns and lion masks before returning to the start of the trail to collect a Narnia badge and either Turkish Delight or a sweet.

Revd Emily Hockliffe Essex and Felicity Wallendszus

‘Stay and play’ fortnight, August 2024

Our second year of running ‘stay and play’ sessions for young children and their carers in the Coach House for a fortnight in August went very well. The team was much the same as last year, and we all worked well together. The sessions ran every morning, Monday to Friday. Some days were very hot, and on those days fewer families came and they came early and left early, to get home before the worst of the heat. We kept a sign-in list of carers and children’s names, so at the end Elizabeth was able to analyse this and produce some statistics! The largest number of children attending was 19 on the Wednesday and Thursday of the second week, when the weather was not good. The average attendance was 14 children with their carers. Every day there were a few people who were there for the first time while others came on several days. On one day we had a lady in her 90s, but she mistook us for something else! Counting individual children by name, it seems that about 80 children and babies took part during the fortnight, so it seems definitely worthwhile. It would be good to do it again in 2025 – if you would like to help, even by being around to chat and make the coffee, you would be very welcome – please feel free to enquire further.

Joan Jones and Elizabeth Knight

Music, worship, spirituality

Worship pattern

Our worship pattern has settled into a regular weekly format of Sunday and midweek celebrations of the Eucharist: 8am and 10am on Sundays and 10am on Wednesdays. We have enjoyed occasional evensong service and other special services, including our Carol Service. Thanks are owed to all who contribute to the smooth running of our worship services: those who welcome, those who prepare the altar linen and supplies, those who sing and serve, those who offer refreshments and hospitality, and so many more who help in often small and unseen ways. It has been wonderful to settle back into a stable pattern of worship, and to welcome new members to our worshipping community.

Online services and Radio Cherwell

Our online services have continued throughout the year and we are extremely thankful to Dave Smith, Kevin Masters, and Karl Wallendszus for their expert work at the sound desk: managing two separate audio streams simultaneously, and also providing a

recording of the sermon for our church website. The online services continue to be an important form of pastoral outreach to the housebound and those in hospital, and to a wider community of worshippers who seek to worship at C.S. Lewis's church. We are very grateful for our collaboration with Radio Cherwell and for their continued support.

Altar Servers

During 2024 our dedicated team of sacristans/servers did an outstanding job. One of them was on duty at every Sunday Eucharist and in addition on special occasions such as Maundy Thursday, Christmas Eve/Day, Ascension Day etc. Their invaluable role before, during, and after the service, allows whoever is taking the service, more time to concentrate on the details of the service itself. The team though remains small. My sincere thanks go to Janet Foot, Helen Dancer, Carrie Barron and to Richard Churchill who have performed the role to such a high standard over the last 12 months. It would be lovely to have some new recruits, and this would enable us to return to the former position of having two servers on duty at each Sunday Eucharist. Full training will of course be given. Anyone interested should speak to Emily, Rob or myself who will be delighted to explain the role in more detail.

Adrian Wood

Choir

The HTHQ choir continued to meet during the year as the church building work progressed, and our thanks are due to the core group of singers for their regular support. We have continued to manage to perform music with full four part/SATB cover, and our special services during the year included Ash Wednesday, the Easter services, Ascension Day, and several combined Evensong events with our sister churches of St Nicholas, Old Marston, and St Andrew's Headington. A highlight as always, was the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah on Easter day.

We were without the organ for some of the year, but made good use of the electronic keyboard as a substitute, and the HTHQ Tickell pipe organ survived the building work without any significant degradation due to the careful wrapping.

The sad departure of our Vicar Laura in November was marked with a special service on the occasion of Christ the King, and the choir performed some of her favourite anthems, which included Macmillan's "O Radiant Dawn", and Tallis' "If ye love me". We managed both Advent and Christmas carol services with expanded choir support, and sang some of our own arrangements of traditional Christmas favourites to suit the available singers.

We are fortunate at Holy Trinity to have talented support in place to assist with keyboard and organ playing in my absence, and thanks are especially due to David Knight, who has covered on several occasions. We are keen to welcome new singers to the choir, even as occasional singers. The group is very friendly and welcoming.

Andrew Patterson

Music group

The Music Group continues to sing on the first Sunday of each month. Drawing from a range of world music including the Iona Community and Taize, the group provides introits and songs during communion, and occasionally, an extroit. We occasionally sing during other service such as the racial justice service, and we enjoyed singing again at the John Radcliffe's Christmas concert. The group has enjoyed Andrew Patterson the organist stepping in to support our singing. We would welcome new singers, especially tenors - we practice once a month.

Monika Blackwell

Julian Group

We meet on the first Friday of the month at 2.30pm at my house in Headington. We take it in turns to choose a passage for group meditation and we meditate on it in silence for half an hour. We discuss the passage, why the person chose it and what it means to us. Later we move on to a social time together over tea and biscuits. New members are very welcome – please speak to me if you are interested.

Sheila Allcock

Home and Fellowship groups

Home Group

We meet in various homes about every three weeks. The next date and venue are arranged at the end of each meeting. There are eight of us and we share our news briefly at the beginning of each 90 minute session and close with prayer. Sometimes we follow a programme of bible study some times reading a book which provides questions for discussion. The leadership of the sessions is shared though we do not find it hard to get discussing.

Last year we read the biblical Books of Ruth Hosea and part of John. We worked through “Tarry Awhile” by Selina Stone and then Rowan Williams “Meeting God in Mark” Then starting Learning to pray with Icons using Rowan Williams’ “The Dwelling of the Light” which will carry on into the New Year. Some times we just have an evening when we all contribute

Our times can be profoundly inspiring or simply encouraging in our journey with God. What I believe we would agree is that we have come to love and appreciate each other in a way that would not have happened otherwise.

Mandy Patterson

Fellowship Group

What used to be the “Quarry” Home group now meets off Old Road once a month on a Wednesday evening. Having sadly lost a much loved longstanding member, Monica Scroggie, who died in June, we have been joined by two new members this year. We continue to pray and read the Bible together, most recently studying the Lord’s Prayer using a study guide. We are always open to welcoming new members, so if you are interested in joining us, please get in touch.

Janet Masters

Communications

Parish Newsletter

We produced five editions of the online parish newsletter in 2024. The subscriber list continued to grow, with the February 2024 newsletter being emailed to 136 recipients, and the November 2024 newsletter going out to 154 recipients. As in previous years, Helen Day continued to post printed versions of the newsletter to those without email access.

A prominent feature of the newsletter this year was updates the progress of the church building project – from pictures of the external blockwork going up in February newsletter to a series of photos of the completed extension and the joyous Celebration Open Weekend in the November newsletter.

My thanks to all who contributed written items and photographs to the newsletter in 2024. Particular thanks go to Adrian Wood for faithfully compiling the Parish Registers, In Loving Memory, and Wedding Bells sections; the Eco Church Group for regularly

sharing reviews of relevant talks and other practically useful information; and Karl Wallendszus for the beautiful photos. Contributions are always welcome at newsletter@hthq.uk. Previous editions of the newsletter can be accessed by visiting hthq.uk/newsletter and clicking on the 'Archive' link.

Yue-Yi Hwa

The Church Building

Flower arrangers

It has been our usual busy year for the flower team with weekly arrangements for the church and special arrangements for Church festivals, weddings and funerals. At the beginning of the year we were still using a lot of artificial flowers as the building work had not finished and many of our resources were in the coach house or in our homes.

We moved into our new storage facilities in the middle of the summer, in time for the Church festival to celebrate the opening of the new building. It was wonderful to be able to have a large number of arrangements around the church which looked lovely and for which we received some very nice compliments

We also had a different experience of doing the flowers for the funeral of Robert Twycross which was held at All Saints Church Headington

Remembrance Day saw a lovely arrangement using artificial poppies on the east window. It had been there for the festival and Rev Emily asked us to keep it there for Remembrance. Slightly risky to get up to the window but thankfully no injuries!!

Do please remember that we rely entirely on donations so please contact Margaret Woodcock if you would like to donate

Also we are always happy to make arrangements to commemorate any event you would like our church community to remember

Margaret Woodcock
Helen Nowicki

Visitors C. S. Lewis

As we moved into 2024, I was concerned about the impact of the ongoing building works on the numbers of visitors coming to see the church. I thus contacted all our regular visiting groups requesting that, if possible, they could visit at times when the builders were not present, i.e. at weekends or after 4pm during the week. I needn't have worried. The builders were very accommodating, and all the planned group visits went ahead. The only feature visitors were unable to see was the Narnia Window that was completely covered away for safety purposes. We continued to sell stock in the "C S Lewis corner," with the Narnia tea towels and China mugs of the church and The Kilns once again being our best sellers. When my work at Christ Church allowed, I led most of the group visits myself. My sincere thanks go to Mike Wooldridge and Roy Kerry who also led groups, and both received excellent feedback from happy visitors. Now we have much improved facilities I am optimistic about the future. Hopefully we can be more proactive in promoting what we have to offer, and the result could prove very beneficial to Holy Trinity.

Adrian Wood

Caretaker/Verger

As regards the caretaking function, 2024 was another successful year in that the church building was open every day during the year during daylight hours. This continued all the way through the building works that finally ended in September. This enabled the local community to find a "quiet" place for contemplation and private prayer, and for our many visitors to see and enjoy the spiritual home of C S Lewis. My thanks must go to Zig Nowicki, to Laura/Emily and to David Smith, for assisting me in the unlocking and locking up role. This role involves locking the main door and checking the chancel, vestry, and extension doors. Also, that all lights are off, candles extinguished, and that the church is generally left in a respectable condition.

The verger role at the Eucharist involves ringing the church bells before and during the service and advising the President/Deacon of the estimated congregation size for the purpose of preparing for communion. Re the bells, I will hopefully be assembling in early 2025 a small team of "ringers" to ensure cover is provided for this important function. As verger I assisted Laura, or whoever was officiating, at the various funerals and weddings held at Holy Trinity in 2024. The weddings held at Holy Trinity in 2024 were all truly joyous occasions and I reported (with pictures) these in the church newsletter.

Adrian Wood

Community and outreach

Pastoral Care Team

The aim of the pastoral care team is to provide support to people who are enduring difficult times. These difficulties may be temporary or longstanding, but we hope that by keeping in regular contact and by providing a listening ear we may be able to help people in their times of need.

One service we can offer is to bring Home Communion to people in their own homes, when they are not able to get to church. We also run the Lifts to Church rota, for those who need transport to attend Church services. During 2024, we have been delighted to have a good number of drivers, all of whom hold current DBS accreditation, and we are tremendously grateful to them for providing this service. The lifts we offer can be weekly or, when appropriate, occasional, depending on need.

Members of the pastoral care team are present at our regular Wednesday services, as well as on Sunday mornings, and it was wonderful to be able to start the coffee rotas in the new Church kitchen in the autumn of 2024. This time of social contact provides an important opportunity to listen to those who need to talk, and we are hugely grateful to the many members of the congregation who take part in the provision of refreshments.

Membership of the team remained constant throughout 2024, except, of course, that we were very sorry to say goodbye to Laura in November. Laura has led the team enthusiastically and with enormous care since she became our Vicar. Under her leadership we expanded the number of regular meetings we hold and concentrated on our core task of providing support where it is needed; we also worked hard to support each other in what can sometimes be challenging work. We miss Laura, of course, but Emily has stepped seamlessly into her shoes.

We rely on members of the congregation to tell us about anyone who might need some support and there is a message in every notice-sheet to alert people as to who to contact.

Anne Tarassenko

Autumn Fair 12 October 2024

This was a combination of the Summer Fete and Christmas Event as the car park was full of building materials for most of the year including over the time when we would usually hold the Summer fete. We continue to try to reduce the quantity of

unsaleable goods and request people are mindful of this when they donate items. Even so, we should remember the fete is the 'original recycling event' which started well over 50 years ago and provides a convenient way of contributing to the 5 R's: refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, and then recycle so it still has its place in modern society with its emphasis of sustainability. Even though we do well financially, we continue to be mindful of our carbon footprint and how we can reduce this, yet provide valuable entertainment and quality products people want to buy especially during these times of financial hardship.

We set up in the Coach House with a few stalls/games outside. There was a steady flow of people throughout the afternoon who seemed to be having a good time and the takings reflect this £1400 (Gift Aid approx: £269).

We all think we need fresh younger blood on the committee and 2025 will see some changes on the committee. *The committee has decided that the last Summer Event will take place on July 12th 2025 at 2pm.*

Lisa Hill

The Thursday Lunch Club

At the Thursday Lunch Club we aim to serve a delicious hot meal in congenial surroundings to elderly people in our area who live alone. We begin with sherry (or juice) and nibbles, then sit down to a 2-course meal, followed by coffee/tea, chocolates and a raffle. We have served lunch to around 20 guests every fortnight, except during August, throughout 2024. This occasion is greatly enjoyed and appreciated by our guests so, although it is hard work for the many volunteers who set the tables, drive the guests, cook the meals and serve and clear away, it is deeply rewarding.

James Larminie and I continue to share the role of Co-ordinator. We are most grateful to David Kiggell, who is our Treasurer. Because of the sterling work of David and, particularly, all the cooks, we have once again been able to keep the cost of our meals to £5 each, which is much appreciated by our guests.

We are always in need of new volunteers so please do get in touch with us if you might be interested in helping to welcome the guests, serve the meals or clear away afterwards. The success of the TLC is built upon the volunteers and their cheerful giving of time and effort. Please do contact me if you feel you might be able to help.

Anne Tarassenko

Soup for the Gatehouse

For some 25 years, soup makers from Headington, including Holy Trinity church and more recently, Corpus Christi church have made warming and nutritious soup for guests of the Gatehouse in the centre of Oxford. The guests are “homeless, vulnerably housed, on low or no income or simply looking for company and community from the drop-in centre in Woodstock Road.” (Gatehouse website). Each soup maker makes a small amount - 2 or 4 litres, but with around 15-20 volunteers, the Headington group contributes towards two weeks of soup for the Gatehouse. This is part of a collaboration called SoupLink, an interfaith group from in and around Oxford, and the group provides warm soup between November and April each year.

The guests at the Gatehouse very much enjoy a mug of warm soup during the colder months of the year, and I would like to extend thanks to loyal soup makers who contribute their home made soup.

Monika Blackwell

The wider world

Deanery Synod

Cowley Deanery Synod



There have been four Deanery Synod meetings during 2024 which have taken place at St James parish church in Cowley. Conversations at Synod can affect and encourage our parish life. We have heard encouraging stories from our neighbouring parishes, as well

as sharing our own in relation to the completion of the building project. The new Rector of St Clements has shared how their Toddler Group and Sunday School are expanding so rapidly, that they are considering a need for a new building. A youth worker WhatsApp group, created after a meeting of people involved in children's work in the Deanery, is helping parishes share knowledge and resources. The Vicar at Iffley Church has spoken about how the bid for Central funding for Youth workers for the Oxford Academy School catchment area is progressing, as well as an Eventide service of a more contemplative style that is attracting 40+ people, who convene afterwards at the pub!

There have been a significant number of personnel changes within the Deanery during 2024. Father Darren Mc Farland left St Andrews earlier in the year and we said goodbye to Rev Laura Biron-Scott in November. Rev Mark Hay has been licensed at St Clements this year as well as Rev. Claire Haynes being licensed at Iffley. In July Rev. Paul Niemiec was licensed to be part time at All Saints and Rev. Martha Weatherill was licensed in September at SS Mary and John.

The Deanery Share for 2024 was £505,532 of which Holy Trinity contributed £47,000. Ongoing conversations have taken place regarding share allocation within the Deanery. The expected Deanery share for 2025 will be £530,809, a 5% increase.

Janet Masters

Eco Church Group

Churchwardens and Eco Church

We were pleased to welcome churchwardens to two of our meetings during the year: Janet Masters attended on 18th March and Margaret Taylor and Linda Davis on 28th August. We thank them all for giving up their time and participating in our discussions with very helpful feedback and suggestions.

Eco Talks Series

Three Eco Talks were given in 2024, all on the theme of water. On 29th May Tom Crook took as his theme *The Great Stink*, giving a fascinating illustrated account of the Victorian development of our present sewerage system, and why, even today, we're battling to keep our rivers and sea free from pollution. On Wednesday 23rd October David Ramsbottom, a Headington-based water engineer, gave a very informative talk entitled *Floods: causes, alleviation and complications*, accompanied by slides, and attracting a whole raft of questions. Finally, on 14th November Judy Webb spoke to us on the topic of *Restoring the rare Lye Valley Fen*. Her illustrated account described this huge and valuable restoration project, creating a local nature reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest, largely undertaken by local volunteers with Judy herself

providing the inspiration and expertise. We're grateful to all our speakers for sharing their enthusiasm and knowledge, and answering the many questions their talks inspired.

Fair Trade Stalls

Two successful Fair Trade Stalls took place in 2024 using goods from Headington Fairtrade. The first was on Mothering Sunday, 10th March, and the subsequent one on 29th September. We're very grateful to all those involved.

Churches Together in Headington (CTiH)

CTiH continued its Eco focus during the year, with a second meeting taking place at St Andrew's on 23rd January. During a service, representatives of the different churches spoke about Eco topics which we might all pursue. Among them were the problem of surface water from Headington draining directly into and endangering Lye Valley, and flooding houses downstream. Our representatives spoke about the A Rocha Eco Church Awards. The topics were discussed further over coffee after the service.

As a result, on 21st May we at HTHQ were pleased to welcome representatives of seven other Headington churches to the Coach House for a presentation about the A Rocha awards. Fr Luke from St Andrew's began the evening with prayer, Hilary Rollin spoke about what we had learned from working towards the awards, Karl Wallendszus showed a live online demonstration of some of the questions churches are asked to complete, and Polly Eaton from A Rocha joined via Zoom to give an illustrated talk about their work and answer questions. After refreshments we worked in groups, sharing our actions to mitigate climate change, and discussing aspirations for the future.

Also arising from the January meeting was *Sponge Headington*, an initiative to mitigate the problem of water runoff. In September Headington churches, including ours, delivered leaflets to relevant households, giving advice about ways of increasing the absorption capacity of their properties by installing water butts and soakaways, using permeable surfaces for drives and creating rain gardens.

Celebration of Creation Care

Representatives of Holy Trinity Headington Quarry were invited to Wesley Memorial Church on Saturday 8th June to join others from parishes all around the diocese at a celebration of their work to care for Creation. Our invitation was a testimony to the work of every member of our church towards becoming carbon neutral as soon as is practically possible. Bishop Steven spoke of how vital this work is, congratulated everyone there and encouraged the parishes of his diocese to keep moving forward. HTHQ received a gift of plants and a card of congratulations, which Hilary Rollin accepted on our behalf.

New water butts

In September the Eco Church Group recommended that new water butts be installed in the churchyard to conserve the tap water supply, to increase the church's water absorption capacity and for the convenience of those who care for graves. A report was prepared for the November PCC meeting indicating that any overflow would go into existing soakaways, that each water butt would have a volume of approximately 200 litres, equalling 200 kilos in weight, and stand on a firm base at sufficient height that the taps be easily accessible for watering cans, that our architect thinks they are a good idea, and that many other churches have them, giving examples.

Jan McLeod

Racial Justice

This year we held an online racial justice course and an in-person course co-hosted with Emily. The alumni from all the courses so far contributed ideas for the racial justice service In February.

Dominic Vickers

Christian Aid Week 2024

The Week began with a Spring Tea on 11th May with stalls selling books, toys and plants as well as the refreshments and home-made cakes. There were also craft activities for children and face painting. As the Coach House car park was full of the builders' equipment the Tea was held in Quarry Village Hall. It was a lovely sunny afternoon and a good social event. It raised almost £450.

The next day there was a Christian Aid theme to the 10am Eucharist and Laura preached about Burundi and the Week's theme of Extraordinary Love. People could donate to Christian Aid using envelopes, the church card reader or the QR code which led to online donation, a so-called e-Envelope. There were also collections at the WI lunch in the Coach House and at a Hunger Lunch hosted by Sheila Allcock.

Altogether we raised £1447 which, with Gift Aid, will be over £1500. This was well up on the 2023 collection but we are still not raising as much as we did before Covid and when we collected door to door.

Elizabeth Knight

Parish Charities

These are the current church charities:

- The Archway Foundation
- Oxfordshire Homeless Movement
- Christians Against Poverty
- WaterAid UK

Payment to them was delayed in 2024 on prudential grounds because of the church extension costs. A decision will be made on this in 2025 when finances will be clearer.

This is the last year in the four year cycle for payment to these charities – there will be discussions about continuing with any of them or selecting new ones in 2025 and the congregation will be invited to vote on this.

Archway

Loneliness and isolation affect the lives of many people in our fast-moving world and the Oxford-based charity, the Archway Foundation, has long played a vital role in tackling it. Holy Trinity's financial support has helped it to do so. The new chief executive, Angelo Fernandes, says that in the past year 82 volunteers and eight members of staff have provided support to 173 people across Oxfordshire. This includes one-to-one support either face to face or by phone and regular group meetings. I can testify to the wonderful Christmas event. Archway also produces a monthly prayer letter for those who wish to receive one.

A major boost for the charity during the year was success in its bid for funding over three years from the National Lottery Reaching Communities scheme. Angelo says this enables them to refocus their strategy and do more to meet the needs of underrepresented groups affected by loneliness such as younger people, people from ethnic minorities and people from deprived wards throughout the county. They will also maintain their current much appreciated support to older adults and people with additional needs such as dealing with mental and physical health issues.

Mike Wooldridge
(Outgoing) PCC member