



CLIFTON TEAM MINISTRY ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Presented on 17th May 2026
at 2pm at
Holy Trinity with St. Francis Church



Farnborough Spencer Academy

1h · 🌐



Wednesdays just got even better!

Our students love spending their lunchtime with Reverend Lydia and Penny and their amazing team from the local church. From fun games to great chats, it's a highlight of the week! 🗨️ 🎲

Thank you for bringing so much joy and positivity to our school community! 🧡



👍❤️ 15

2 shares



Agenda

Annual Meeting of Parishioners and The Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

1. Welcome and opening worship
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of last meeting (Appendix 1)
4. Church Wardens' reports
5. Election of Church Wardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Minutes of last meeting (Appendix 1)
2. Reports:
 - a. Electoral Roll
 - b. PCC Report
 - c. Finance Report & Appointment of the Independent Examiner
 - d. Deanery Synod Report
 - e. Safeguarding Report
 - f. Parish Report from Team Rector
 - g. Parish Activities Reports
3. Elections and Appointments:
 - a. Election of Deanery Synod
 - b. Election of PCC Members

CHURCH WARDENS' REPORTS

ST. MARY'S CHURCH

2025 has been mixed with the joy of God's creation and blessings and sadness of loss. We have met challenges with grace and determination.

Changes have happened over the year; Clare Ashton had stepped down as Church Warden after many years of service and we thank her for all that she has done and continues to do for the church and Michael Wilcox has stepped into the role of Deputy Church Warden; we have also welcomed many new faces in to our church and each one is a blessing from God. In October we mourned the passing of our dear friend and Deputy Church Warden Ron Hancock and recently a faithful member of the congregation John Radford, our hearts and prayers go out to their families.

Thank you to all the Ministry Team - Lydia, Esther, and Penny, Andy and Gill for their leadership, support, hard work, practical help and prayers, together you have made a good team and supported us all in low moments and celebrated in our highs. Your hard work and support are much appreciated. On the 4th October we were invited to witness the licensing as Licensed Lay Ministers of Penny and Andy either in person at the minster or online.

We are encouraged that so many new people have joined the established congregation of our church who have contributed to the life of the church in a variety of ways as well as a range of activities across the Parish. We pray that this will continue in the future as we reach out to the people of Clifton with the message of God's love, hope, mercy and peace.

On the 19th of October we did a river baptism for Richard Barnes, both Lydia and Esther had a splashing time.

The remainder of this report gives details of the fabric of St Mary's and related issues, and church services and activities.

Building Group

The building group has met a few times during 2025 to monitor issues relating to the fabric of the church building. Its membership is the Team Vicar, Churchwardens & Deputy Churchwarden, Kate Wilson, Clare Ashton.

General Maintenance

We are very grateful to so many people who have given their time to help clean the church throughout the year and undertaken general maintenance and tidied the churchyard, also to Clare who has done most of the flower arrangements (including weddings) and maintains them in the church.

Regular Maintenance

This has taken place or is planned, including the roof alarm, boiler, PAT testing, fire equipment, and lightening conductor.

Health & Safety – The smoke alarms are checked but at irregular intervals and have not been recorded, Fire safety check has been done and fire extinguishers have been replaced.

Electricity Supply – This appears satisfactory at the moment; we also had the bulbs for the flood lights outside checked and replaced ready for Christmas. The bulbs were replaced with LEDs.

Security – The roof alarm has been set off on a couple of occasions but no intruders identified and a faulty sensor has been replaced. Roof alarm was serviced on 21st November.

Boiler – The boiler is working well and heats the church up. Now the boiler has settled, a few adjustments are needed to the timer and temperature as sometimes it is on when not needed.

Gullies & Gutters – The gullies and gutters have been cleared on the 30/04/2026, Jonathan had found some of the extra-large slates broken on the North Transit West facing while cleaning.

Bell Tower and Bells – No maintenance in the bell tower has been undertaken this year but we have had the architect inspect the tower. We still have a pigeon issue with them nesting on the walls where some of the stones have fallen off.

Churchyard and walls

The Nottingham City Council (NCC) are responsible for mowing the churchyard, but due to financial cuts, this is happening less frequently. However, both Gerald and Michael Wilcox with the help of a few volunteers have undertaken some of the mowing to ensure the church yard looks tidy. The Garden of Rest has been kindly mowed by Lawrence Noe on a regular basis.

Flowers have been put in some of the old graves and around the church and look really colourful. The council have removed or cut back most of the ivy around the churchyard walls.

Outstanding Fabric Issues – There is still a large back log of outstanding issues to be addressed which have been prioritised and are contained in the 2021 Quinquennial report. These include the internal church walls and nave floors; repairs to the tower, external walls and church paths; repairs to the external fabric of 2 windows at the west end of the church, and conversion of one of the existing toilets to a disabled toilet.

Music at St Mary's

Musical Events – We enjoyed NCO Autumn/Winter Concert 2025 which was held on the 15 November.

We have also welcomed the Clifton Community Singers at special services such as at Easter Service.

Organist – Our organist, Gareth North has now been playing the organ on a regular basis and occasionally Lydia, with Lydia, Esther and Graeme Barker playing the piano at other times for which we are very thankful. Thank you.

Bellringing – This is welcomed by all those attending church and living in the Village. Bells are not rung often but may be rung at some weddings and funerals but unfortunately not on Sundays prior to our services due to a shortage of bellringers.

Fundraising

Hire of Church Premises- The church has continued to be used by the East Midlands Orienteering Group, using the Pace Room twice a year.

'Drop-in' coffee mornings have been organised at St Mary's on the last Friday morning of the month with the help of Mary Hall and others. This has raised funds for the Church

Regular Giving – We continue to be very thankful to those who attend St Mary's and to those in the wider community, who regularly contribute financially to the work and the life of our church. We are also grateful to those who have given to specific requests across the Parish and those that have given through our card machine.

Church Services

Services have continued in the pattern established for the last few years with Morning Worship on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month and the 2nd and 4th being Holy Communion with members of the congregation encouraged to participate in the services. A 9:30 Holy Communion has recently started which

is more a traditional service. Thank you to all those who regularly undertake various responsibilities to assist with the smooth running of our services, including leading; 'welcoming' people at the door; those who do intercessions, readings or assist with 'giving communion'; and those who help with and serve refreshments after the services.

The Pace Room, where the Children's 'Shooting Stars' group takes place, continues to work well and the number of children has grown. We are delighted that the weekly Children's group is attracting more children which is an answer to our prayers. A huge thank you to all those involved in leading and supporting the group. I believe we all enjoy the children telling us in their own words and showing us what they have been doing in their group at the end of each service. It shows us all the innocent and incredible way they express their faith in Jesus.

The Occasional offices in 2025 - we had a Baptism in the River Trent, Weddings, Funerals, and Burial of Ashes, and Baptisms at the font.

Over the Christmas period, we had a Walking Nativity through the village, then Carols by Candlelight followed by mulled wine and mince pies, we had a Christingle service and Midnight Communion on Christmas Eve.

At Easter, we celebrated the Dawn Service again outside the church when the birds joined us in song, followed by breakfast in the Pace Room.

Opening up St Marys' on Easter and August bank holidays as well as having an open day on Wednesday 20th has certainly raised its profile in the local community and brought many other adults and children into the building. We hope and pray that opening up and welcoming everyone into the church will continue to draw people into the church and join us in worship in the months and years to come.

The Future

As churchwardens, we pray that God will give us guidance and support to make the church inviting and welcoming to all and under the leadership of Lydia, Esther and Penny the church will grow and be a safe and welcoming place to be and learn and to give thanks and praise to the glory of God.

Richard Harvey, Churchwarden, St Mary's Church

Michael Wilcox, Deputy Churchwarden, St Mary's Church

HOLY TRINITY with ST. FRANCIS CHURCH

The Past Year

This year's report has to start with the sad news that Shirley Wheatley, my fellow churchwarden of numerous years, died unexpectedly in December 2025.

Shirley was an integral part of the life of church in Clifton, worshipping firstly in Clifton at St. Francis Church and then moving with everyone else from St. Francis to the newly re-named Holy Trinity with St. Francis Church in September 2016. After some time she was invited to become a church warden at Holy Trinity and was there at the start of the new Monday morning Toddlers and Toast Group, Tuesday afternoon Kid's Church and Wednesday's Drop-In and Youth Cafe.

As everyone knows she has left a huge hole in the life of the church and her friendship with everyone was both reflected in the huge turn-out at her funeral service and the fact that at least £700 has been donated in memory of Shirley to the Toddlers and Toast fund by her family, friends and church friends.

I for one will not forget Shirley as a friend and fellow warden and I am grateful to everyone who stepped up to fill the various gaps left by Shirley's untimely absence.

The past year has seen a great deal of activity across the Parish and in particular here at Holy Trinity Church with St. Francis. Examples include the increase in outreach to the local community including new term-time weekly gatherings for children and young people on Monday nights, school kids on Tuesday afternoons and Wednesday evening youth cafe.

Fabric Report -

St. Francis Church Site

The Diocese continues to talk to interested parties about developing the land once occupied by the church and vicarage and eventually the capital receipt received by the Diocese will be given to Holy Trinity with St. Francis Church.

Holy Trinity Church Hall

The future of the hall remains undecided. Once the church building has been made fit for purpose within our own limited financial resources it will be then time to make some firm decisions as to the future of the hall.

Holy Trinity Church Building

The main event to record this year is the breakdown of the church boiler in February 2026. Thoughts that the relatively old boiler could be repaired were quickly dispelled and advice has been sought from the Diocese as to the best possible and affordable system to replace it. This process will take time but it is hoped to have a new heating system up and running by Autumn 2026.

In the meantime I was grateful to see how everyone concerned adapted to the situation we all found ourselves in.

Having had the Lady Chapel refurbished in 2024 and fitted with electric heaters, most church services, meetings and events transferred to the Lady Chapel. Although not ideal, having the Lady Chapel available was a God send.

I am grateful to everyone concerned who adapted to the situation we found ourselves in over the cold winter weeks and I am even more grateful to various individuals and organisations within the parish who have already donated monies towards a new heating system even though no official fund -raising appeal has yet been launched.

During the year the lights in the main body of the church have been upgraded and replaced. Plans are already in place for a new pathway to the side doors with disabled access in mind. This plan is currently subject to Diocesan approval.

Day to Day Maintenance

I remain grateful to everyone who helps out in any small or large way with the day to day maintenance of the building and grounds including those who help maintain the inside and outside fabric of the building, those who clean the church, those who cut the grass and those who look after the Community Garden.

Life of the Church

The church building continues to be used on a regular basis throughout the week. Sunday services are held most weeks at 9-30 am and 4-00 pm with a communion service taking place at least once a month at each of the services. Attendances at both services are supported by an increasing and committed congregation and it was particularly heartening to see that there was no noticeable drop in numbers at services and events during the cold winter weeks due to a lack of heat. I am grateful for the people on the weekly Sunday morning rota who carry out such tasks as welcoming people at the door, serving refreshments, reading the lessons and assisting with communion.

I am equally grateful to those on the afternoon rota who lead and assist the children's groups during the service.

During the year Shana and Holly were appointed as Children and Families Workers to help lead and assist with children's work during the week and weekends at both church and local schools.

Julie left during the year as Operations Manager and returned some time later as our Parish Volunteers Coordinator.

In September 2025 Andy and Penny were appointed as Licensed Ministers in the Clifton Parish and each have specific tasks to work on within the Parish.

Weekly groups continue to meet in church such as Monday morning Toddlers Group, Monday night church youth group, Tuesday afternoon kid's church and Wednesday Drop-In and Youth Cafe as well as ad hoc Saturday family and messy church sessions.

New initiatives have seen the introduction of a number of monthly small groups, weekly Advent and Lent Groups, a monthly Men's Breakfast meeting and a new Pastoral Team where a small number of people take communion out to housebound members of the Parish in their homes or care homes.

The Future

The future of Holy Trinity with St. Francis Church looks bright. New initiatives are being introduced on a regular basis to broaden the appeal of "church" to our local community. The building is being maintained as best we can and plans are in place for the PCC to consider a new and expanded kitchen area, a re-designed door entrance/porch and re-configuration of the rooms at the side of church. These proposals are of course subject to Diocesan approval and are only viable with suitable financial resources in place.

All future plans for buildings and worship are of course only possible with the help and foresight of a committed clergy team and volunteers and Clifton Parish is particularly blessed with Lydia, Esther, Gill and Penny at the helm. They are supported by our parish congregations, wardens, lay ministers, children's workers, treasurer and a whole host of willing volunteers who strive to bring the Christian message to everyone within the Parish of Clifton.

Kevin Lancashire

Church Warden at Holy Trinity with St. Francis Church

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORTS

St. Mary's

There have been some changes during the year. Two of our longstanding faithful members have sadly passed away, others have moved to worship at other churches whilst others have decided to remove their name from the electoral roll due to their infrequent attendance at church.

However, we have been very pleased to welcome Richard Barnes and Helen Wagstaff, who have joined St Mary's church.

The total number on the Electoral Roll for 2026 now stands at 41.

Clare Ashton, Electoral Roll Officer

Holy Trinity with St. Francis

Last year there were 57 on the Holy Trinity with St Francis Electoral Roll.

During the year to April 2026, 2 people have died.

There are 5 new names on the list who now regularly attend Holy Trinity with St Francis.

The total number on the Electoral Roll for 2025 now stands at 60.

Christina Weldon, Electoral Roll Officer

PCC REPORT

The PCC met 5 times in 2025 and discussions this year centred around:

- Finances and giving: as lots of money was spent from the reserves on the buildings.
- Safeguarding: as we approved new people to be volunteers and considered the five new safeguarding standards:
 - 1. Culture, Leadership and Capacity:** Church bodies maintain safe and healthy cultures, with leaders driving high-quality safeguarding practices and securing necessary resources.
 - 2. Prevention:** Implementing a planned, proactive range of measures designed to prevent abuse from occurring in any church context.
 - 3. Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk:** Ensuring risk assessments and safety plans are high-quality, effective, and collaborative.
 - 4. Victims and Survivors:** Ensuring church responses to disclosures and support are timely, effective, victim-centered, and support healing.
 - 5. Learning, Supervision and Support:** Ensuring those engaged in safeguarding receive the training, professional development, and supervision needed to respond effectively
- Plans to improve the access to Holy Trinity with St Francis (a successful Disability Award grant was awarded early 2026).
- Conversations around becoming an official "Inclusive Church" verses doing more to outwardly show we are an inclusive church by our nature.
- Staffing: including Julie leaving the post of Ops Manager and reassessing what we need for the next season and gaining funding to support 2 x 20 hr Children and Family worker posts.

FINANCE REPORT for Clifton Parish

2025 was an expensive year with major repairs carried out at both Churches.

The cost of the work on the drains at St Mary's was £49,681 (including Architects fee of £3,584). A grant of £8,681 was received from the Listed Places of Worship to cover the VAT and the monthly coffee mornings raised £611.

The kitchen renovations cost £4,876 and a grant was received for £3,291.

The window repairs cost £950 which was off-set by a Net Zero Quick Grant of £840.

At Holy Trinity with St Francis the roof repairs cost £43,312 (including Architect fee of £4,132). A grant of £8,000 was received from Simmons Charity and £4,050 from S&NDBF source. Donations of £100 were also received.

The new lights cost £4,120 which was covered by a Net Zero Quick Grant.

The new drapes cost £6,200 which was mainly met by a Diocesan SDF4 grant of £5,750.

We also had to pay for the removal of the bees at HTwSF which cost £3,555.

To cover these major expenses £20,000 was transferred from the CCLA Deposit account and £50,000 shares were also cashed in. This has put a large hole in our reserves.

We paid our Parish Share in full - £36,744.

Other expenses included refreshments and activities for the various groups, including the Youth Café and schools' activities.

There was a rise in the utility bills, particularly the gas, as the heating was back on in St Mary's and it is on most days at HTwSF.

Maintenance on the bells at both Churches was carried out by T.L Blyth & Co. (£480 each Church).

A legacy of £5000 was received for St Mary's. Nottingham City Mission gave a grant of £492 for Christmas gifts. There were donations of £400 and £100 to St Mary's bell fund.

Donations were also regularly received from WI Craft Club, Clifton Community Singers, Toddlers & Toast, the Drop-in Café and the coffee morning at St Mary's.

Donations via the contactless machines totalled £771.

Our main source of income is the regular giving by standing order, weekly envelopes and collection on the plate each week. Thank you to all who contributed.

Because of the high costs incurred in 2025 and the depletion of our reserves, a plea was put out early this year for everyone to prayerfully consider their giving. Thank you to those who have set up new standing orders and all who have increased their giving. It is greatly appreciated.

In January I drew up a budget for 2026 which showed a projected shortfall of £4,500 without any further major expenses.

During the first quarter of 2026 we have already had unexpected costs of £900 for new fire extinguishers at HTwSF and £900 at St Mary's for clearing the gutters/gullies.

We must all do our part to find ways of increasing our income to maintain our buildings and continue the work of serving God in this Parish.

My thanks go to Kevin Lancashire and Richard Harvey for their help throughout the year and to David Simpkin for auditing the accounts and offering to do so again next year.

I propose that the 2025 accounts, having been audited by David Simpkin, be accepted by this meeting.

Joanne Naaktgeboren,
Treasurer

DEANERY SYNOD & DIOCESAN SYNOD

Meetings take place over the year where Lydia, myself and other reps attend Deanery Synod, it provides space and time for Clergy and laity to come together and hear about what's going on in the diocese and receive information from different diocesan members of staff. Deanery Synod met three times over the course of 2025 with the first being a deanery celebration with Bishop Paul in attendance. This was a wonderful time of rejoicing in all that God is doing across the deanery through sharing stories, prayers and worship.

The other two meetings included input from Charities like Open Home, conversations around inviting people to church and what does it look like to run Alpha courses especially for young adults and teenagers. Deanery Synod also welcomed Martin Cooper the Chief Executive and Katrina Proctor from the Finance Department who both shared some of the diocesan vision specifically relating to the finances.

The past year the Deanery Synod meetings have been encouraging spaces for our churches to meet together.

I also sit on Diocesan Synod which meets twice a year. At these meetings we look at specifics in relation to what is going on in the diocese and it brings together Bishops, clergy and laity to oversee what is happening in the life of the diocese.

Rev Esther Hutchinson

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

The PCC has a legal requirement to report on safeguarding progress and include a statement as to whether or not they have complied with their duty to have 'due regard' to the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance. We can confirm that Clifton PCC has complied with this duty.

The Clifton Parish Safeguarding Team

This year, our team includes

Penny Carrier as Parish Safeguarding Officer (Children)

Rebecca North as Parish Safeguarding Officer (Adults)

and Julie Gancarczyk has taken on the role of Volunteers Co-ordinator.

Lydia, Esther, Penny, Rebecca and Julie have continued to work closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team to manage all safeguarding concerns in the parish.

PARISH REPORT

After so much change, new initiatives and growth during my first 5 years in Clifton, 2025 needed to be a year of consolidation and of focussing on growing the faith of those of us who are a part of our churches.

As such, there aren't too many crazy new highlights to report on, but an increasing sense of God building his church in readiness for a new season of growth- both numerically and in the depth of our faith and reliance on him.

2025

Esther and I began 2025 by undertaking "Visits from a Vicar" and these times were really special, just to take a moment in the busyness of Parish life to sit and chat and share together was wonderful. It was quite an undertaking though and with Penny's help in the first quarter of the year we managed to visit **65** homes of people who regularly attend Sunday worship.

Some of the things we established in 2024 grew and grew in 2025 (like the Youth Café), other things have been more tricky to establish (like Kids' Church) and there is an increasing sense that we need to take church out of the buildings and engage with people where they are. A foretaste of what that could look like has been starting "Faith and Fun" as an afterschool club at Highbank School which this year has launched at Whitegate School too. I wonder what else we might have tried in terms of the church breaking out of the buildings by this time next year?

I think last year saw the most baptisms and confirmations in one year than I've ever seen before and we are so grateful to God for the people he is bringing along to be a part of Clifton Parish and for the difference that faith is making in their lives – that really is what it's all about!

Team wise, it was a joy to be at Penny and Andy's licensing service at Southwell Minster in October as we celebrated the culmination of two years of hard work and watched them become official Licensed Lay Ministers.

On a personal note it was a huge honour to be asked to preach at the service – I think it was the most nervous I have ever been – preaching in front of all the candidate’s family and friends, as well as colleagues, bishops and a live stream!

I was also blown away last year by the short film that Matthew Riley and his team put together – if it passed you by, you can check out “The Wise” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQH6RSuiggw> – it really is incredible!

In the midst of the joy of 2025, we have experienced a great deal of loss and sorrow too. None more so that the deaths of Ron Hancock who had previously served as deputy churchwarden at St Mary’s for a number of years and Shirley Wheatley, who was a churchwarden at Holy Trinity with St Francis at the time of her death. These two people have been a wonderful support for me and the team during our time in Clifton and served our parish faithfully over many, many years. We are so grateful to them, the legacy they leave and the love and care they showed us. We miss them and thank God for them.

Staff and funding

At the end of last year we said goodbye to Julie in her role as Operations Manager and hello to Shana and Holly as part-time children and families workers. Applying for and managing the funding of all these different roles is a hard job and I am so grateful to Joanne, our treasurer for all her help on this, as well as to the diocese who are working hard on our behalf to secure national funding to be used at local level.

As some of these funding pots begin to run out, we do have a task on our hands to seek external funding and we are receiving help from a fundraising consultant for this and some other projects which are being explored.

Thank you

There is a lot more I could say, but my main feeling is one of gratitude to everyone who travels on this adventure with me. The team – Penny, Esther, Gill, Shana, Holly and Gill work tirelessly day in day out and are a huge source of encouragement and support to me, but more widely, people are serving Jesus in their lives and in our church every day and it makes a difference. To quote one of my favourite all age worship songs:

*“We are a city on a hill
We are a light in the darkness
Jesus living in us can change the world!”*

--- well our bit of it anyway!

Love and blessings

Rev Lydia Cartwright

Team Rector

PARISH ACTIVITY REPORTS

Bellringers

The year opened with a visit to St Mary's by Beeston Ringers, who rang a 'Year Touch', that is 2025 changes in the order of the bells, to celebrate the New Year.

Because of a lack of available ringers we have rarely been able to ring for Sunday services, but there has been plenty of ringing activity at both St Mary's and Holy Trinity with St Francis.

All the wedding couples who requested bells in the year were provided with ringing, with help from ringers from outside the parish. The bells were rung for the funeral of Ron Hancock at St Mary's. Again with help from other Parishes, the bells at St Mary's were rung to celebrate VE Day.

During the year visiting ringers attempted thirteen Quarter Peals (at least 1260 changes) at St Mary's. Three full peals were rung at St Mary's and one was rung at Holy Trinity with St Francis. (A full peal is at least 5040 changes).

Ringers from Pembrokeshire came to the Midlands to see three bells cast at Taylor's Loughborough Foundry. The bells will eventually be installed in Pembroke Church. The Ringers stayed on after the casting and rang at St Mary's, and Holy Trinity with St Francis.

A regional ringing competition for Young Ringers took place at St Mary's in March. Young ringers from across the Midlands took part. The standard of ringing is judged and marked. A Band of Young Ringers from USA took part as guests.

Southwell and Nottingham Diocesan Guild of Change Bell Ringers held an eight bell practice at St Mary's. Our local District of the Guild held also held two at St Mary's.

On the first Thursday of each month the Ruddington Ringers join us for practice at St Mary's.

A National Young Ringers event will take place at St Mary's in July. Young Ringers and their families will descend on Clifton from across the UK. The participants will also be able to visit Holy Trinity with St Francis. I am told we can expect about 300 people on that day. It should keep me out of mischief!

As can be seen, although we have unfortunately been unable to ring for Sunday services, the bells at St Mary's and Holy Trinity with St Francis are being rung regularly.

Austin Bryan

Clifton Ringing Master

Care Homes

Since the Covid restrictions were lifted, Esther and I have been able to visit Clifton View Care Home and then Clifton Manor Care Home (nursing and residential) on a monthly basis. Then in 2025, through a chance visit we were able to add Kingfisher Court to our monthly service plan.

It is hard to explain the joy it is to share Jesus with the care home residents each month. There is often laughter, sometimes tears as an old hymn brings back memories from the past, and a real sense of God's presence. It really is a privilege to be invited in.

Rev Lydia Cartwright

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REPORT

Safeguarding

This year has been particularly challenging in my role as Children's PSO, especially with the number of safeguarding concerns we have needed to report to the Diocese. It hasn't simply been a matter of seeking advice, but of acting on that advice — which requires a significant amount of time, follow-up, and emotional capacity. On the positive side, it shows that we are confident in our responsibilities and that we follow safeguarding procedures well. However, the volume and complexity of cases does take a toll.

We have always received excellent support from the Diocese, and I am grateful for that. At the same time, the recent email about changes within the diocesan safeguarding team — staff illness, people leaving, and a review once the INEQE report is received — has raised a few concerns for me. As our ministry continues to grow, the current level of demand is not sustainable in its present form, and we may need to explore alternative ways of ensuring that both the Leadership Team and The Safeguarding team are adequately supported.

Children & Families and Youth

It was a pleasure to welcome Shana and Holly into the team in November. Holly to work with 0-4s and Shana 5 – 11s with me overseeing the entire children's work and picking up the responsibility for Youth work. As mentioned earlier I am also the PSO for Children and I've been the Deputy Lead Recruiter and Lead Recruiter over the last year.

Toddlers and Toast

Holly and the Toddler team, Ruth Humphries, Janine Eyer and Rose Brown have been doing a great job with this. The lack of heating affected numbers for a while and it was decided to move into the Lady Chapel when the weather was at its coldest. Holly has introduced a seasonal Messy Toddlers with activities and crafts which the children enjoy. A prayer board has been introduced too.

Faith and Fun

Shana leads the team - Rev Lydia, Hannah, Rev Esther and Holly to run an After School Club at both Highbank and Whitegate primary schools on Mondays and Wednesday, around 20–30 children attend, they explore worship and prayer and Bible stories and enjoy a craft activity. These are reaching many children who do not attend church.

Kids Church

Our Tuesday after-school Kids' Church attendance has been quite variable this year, with numbers ranging anywhere from 2 to 15 children. The sessions themselves are positive, but the inconsistency makes it harder to build momentum and takes a lot of resource and volunteer time. As we begin rolling out after-school clubs more widely across other primary schools, we're hopeful that these children will engage in those and maybe we can step back from this activity. Thank you to the team, Shana (lead), Lydia, Esther, Mick, Dawn and Cheryl.

Harvester Walk

Holly had a passion to restart the Harvester walk and I guess many will remember that from years ago. Walking and praying at St Marys and along the way to the Harvester in Wilford for Breakfast.

SEND Church

Holly led a team, Penny, Lydia, Esther, Julie and Aaron for a new initiative, a safe space for children and families with diagnosed SEND needs. You will have seen the images in the Newsletter and the feedback from the first event was very encouraging, and the second one is on 16th May. The children and families engaged in the Easter Story through interactive sensory trays, they had a quiet and calm space and opted in if they wanted to hear and experience the story and worship, in the Lady Chapel.

Pancake Party

Shana led the Pancake Event which was a great success, her sister Jess provided and cooked for us fresh pancakes which everyone enjoyed and the activities went down really well. Thank you to everyone that came along to help and support us.

Christmas and Easter

Its almost too much to list but in a nutshell we provided assemblies and visits for our local primary schools, a totally joyous and busy time for us all. In the Easter holidays we worked as Churches Together to provide a Holiday Club for 4 days. Thank you to everyone involved in these events.

Monday Night Church Youth Group

This holds a special place in my heart as I see our young people growing and exploring in their faith, asking those challenging questions as they explore more deeply and growing together as a community. Thank you to the volunteers who help me with this; Rebecca, Mick, Richard. Aaron and Sue.

Tuesday Night Growing Leaders

I really felt called to start a young leaders' course and Esther was happy to lead with me. Aaron has joined us as a leader too. We have 6 young people who come along once a month on a Tuesday for snacks and to explore what young leadership might look like as a Christian. The session last week was looking at characteristics of a Christian leader; where we might feel confident and where we might need to develop but recognising that this is God's plan not ours and looking to Him to shape, guide and lead us. I really hope and pray to see them build in confidence compassion and courage over the weeks of this year long course. In July we are going to the Christian Festival "Dreaming the Impossible" as part of the course.

Wednesday Night Youth Café

We welcome over 120 young people each week into the church for games, activities and snacks and although it can be challenging it's a highlight to see them all being able to hang out together in a safe space instead of on the streets. We open a prayer/reflective space in the Lady Chapel and are hoping to start a Youth Alpha. The ratios of children to leaders has to be kept and we have a team of over 17 volunteers and support from the local Police every week, we are truly grateful to everyone involved in this. Thank you

Sunday Church

Holy Trinity with St. Francis

We have been working on our Sunday Church children's group at HTwSF to enable young people to meet with Jesus in a space that feels comfortable and safe. We decided to open up the activities to all, stages not ages and that worked OK in the hall but the space felt too large and it was hard to keep track of all of the children and still have the doors open for any people who needed to come into church.

We have now moved back into the Lady Chapel using the same principle, stages not ages, and we've also introduced an Intro, for everyone to engage in before the activities, the story, exploring questions a song and prayer. Activities are a themed sensory tray, craft or reading and exploring scripture more deeply. It's working well at the moment however on a busy Sunday and when numbers increase we will have to rethink the space. Thank you to all our volunteers to help with this. Janine, Katie, Sarah Powell, Sarah Riley and Michelle.

St Marys

It's great to see the number of children growing at St Marys, this group works well with all ages together, spending time sharing their week, praying and choosing crafts or Bible exploration. Our older ones tend to lead the Bible Exploration using a leader's script that I prepare. The prayers from our young people at this session never fail to make my heart jump for joy. Thank you to everyone that helps with the group at St Marys; Christine, Cheryl, Richard, Rebecca and Christina.

As you can see we are very busy and I am always seeking out more volunteers. The volunteers we have are amazing but we don't want to overwhelm them and I'm always aware of that.

I'm excited for the year ahead but would also ask for your prayers to continue funding this ministry. As we move into June I have one year of funded work remaining and Lydia is working hard to secure funding for us all. Please pray for our children, it's a joy and a privilege to be part of this ministry at Clifton.

We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and His might, and the wonders that He has done." – Psalm 78:4

A reminder that:

Faith is passed on through story not pressure and children deserve to hear about God's goodness in ways they can access and understand. The next generation is not an afterthought, but they are central to God's plan.

Blessings

Penny Carrier

Children, Families & Youth Ministry Team Lead

Drop-In Café

The drop-in café notices the loss of Shirley at the hatch, but we are grateful to Sue Wells for stepping in on refreshments and also to Jigsaw Dawn who brings cake as well as jigsaws and Colin who sets everything up! It really is a team effort!

Each week sees 30-40 people from all walks of life and of all ages, from 2 – 90+ including some residents from Clifton View. It is a joyful mix. Some people just pop in briefly to swap a jigsaw, some stay all morning and help prepare crafts. At 11am we stop for a shared time of worship and prayer.

Coffee Mornings

The coffee mornings at St Mary's on the last Friday of the month have continued to flourish over this past year. A big thank you to Mary Hall, Kate Wilson and Christine Marshall for enabling these mornings to take place.

The coffee mornings have become a safe space for people to come and meet with friends, catch up and of course have a good cup of tea and a slice or two of cake.

It has been wonderful to see friendships and connections flourish over the past year with people being able to come and be present for one another during these times (and of course eat several slices of cake as well). The mornings have also become a chance to raise funds for the church, with donations gratefully received from those who come along.

A big thank you to all those who help from making tea, coffee and cake to those who help move pews and tables, it is greatly appreciated.

Revd. Esther Hutchinson

Community Events

As we seek to continue scattering seed across Clifton, the large community events that we put on are invaluable ways to connect, especially with families who wouldn't usually come to church. Last year we enjoyed our regular events: Easter Fun with Egg Hunt and Summer Fun events at St Mary's and Pancake Parties, Summer Fun and the legendary Light Night on Halloween.

A huge thank you to the wide range of people who help to make these events happen, and to God who usually sorts out the weather for us!

Rev Lydia Cartwright

Gardens

Holy Trinity with St. Francis

Over the last year the garden team has grown, we are now back to four volunteers, myself, Jack, Colin and Sue.

In the church grounds, the bushes and brambles were cut back.

Sadly, the back of the church needs a tidy up after Mal and Katherine departure, they did a fantastic job and did keep on top of things.

Sue and Colin have added more flowers and Colin and a family friend fixed the fence posts and also painted it.

Grass cutting started at Easter, Jack will help with that after his safeguarding meeting.

Ian Croft

St. Mary's Church

The past year has seen significant progress in both the appearance and safety of our churchyard. Following a vibrant spring display of daffodils and a colourful variety of summer bedding, we focused on essential maintenance and ecological stewardship.

Learning how an ancient church ground should be maintained is a journey; while this path initially attracted some misunderstandings, extensive research and advice from other diocesan grounds have put us firmly on the right track. Many visitors have remarked on how pleasant the grounds now look, despite a very wet winter slowing our early 2026 progress.

Tree Management & Safety

- **Major Works:** To protect the church building, the City Tree Department secured planning permission for the three *Thuja plicata* trees to undergo a crown lift (up to 4m) and hazard pruning (up to 3m) in 2026.
- **Southwest Corner:** Three trees here were pruned; however, they are reaching the end of their life and showing signs of rot. A notice has been placed requesting the removal of personal remembrance items, as these trees will require removal in due course.
- **Path Safety:** The slab path next to the Pace Room was levelled to reduce trip hazards, and the City Council completed two stages of improvements to the tarmac path.

Waste, Infrastructure & Heritage

- **Circular Waste System:** We have moved towards a sustainable model. Autumn leaves were shredded and composted on-site, while debris from the *Thuja* trees was safely redistributed across grassy areas to mitigate fire hazards.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** The notice board was treated, oak gate posts renovated to highlight their natural patina, and a new letterbox was installed.
- **The Grade II Arch:** Following an incident where the gate to Clifton Hall was forced open, we removed a chain lock that was causing vibration damage and cracking to the historic arch. We are reviewing long-term security solutions.
- **Reflective Spaces:** Our donated garden chairs and bench seat now offer a quiet place for visitors to enjoy the surroundings and reflect.

Floral Enhancements & Biodiversity

Our aim is to soften previously bare areas using sustainable, shade-loving, and native species.

- **The Entrance:** We reintroduced native English bluebells, snowdrops, and primroses. Shady areas near the gate were enhanced with donated **Hostas** and *Primula vulgaris* relocated from the west corner.
- **Seasonal Colour & Walls:** Five overgrown graves were brightened with summer bedding. The west wall features orange wallflowers (*Erysimum*), and we await the results of foxglove sowings. The wall ivy was cut back with help from the city team; this cleared space will be used for summer flowers in 2026.
- **Back Door alcove:** French Marigolds gave a fine show, this year a Camellia and other flowers are planted.
- **Gladioli and Dahlias:** These had been donated and gave a lovely end of summer show around the Pace room and over in the far west wall.
- **Stewardship:** Reclaimed slate has been used to suppress weeds near the front doors; this project is now nearing completion on the right-hand side.

Sustainability & Eco Church Progress

We are currently in our **observation and discovery year** as we work towards the **A Rocha UK Eco Church Silver Award**.

- **Water Harvesting:** We now have two IBC rainwater collection tanks. The installation of an indoor/outdoor tap in the toilet has greatly improved efficiency during dry periods.
- **Composting:** With three active composting bins, we have cancelled our paid brown bin service, recycling all organic waste on-site.
- **Caring for God's Acre:** We manage grass heights in accordance with guidance from the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, the RHS, and the Church of England. This balances neatness with ecological health.
- **The Church Meadow:** A dedicated, signposted area is now set aside to support insects, birds, and mammals. In late summer 2026, local rangers will assist with a traditional scythe harvest.

Evidence Gathering (The Discovery Year)

We are systematically recording wildlife through photographs to be compiled into an evidence log.

- **The "Meadow Metric":** We are monitoring the return of native grasses and wildflowers in untouched zones.

- **Collaborative Conservation:** Our partnership with the local Green Guardians and Rangers remains vital. We have exchanged rare Nottingham crocuses (*Crocus vernus*) and primroses with the nature reserve at Clifton Grove.

Future Plans & Notable Dates

- **Churches Count on Nature:** Join us for **Love Your Burial Ground Week (6th–14th June 2026)**. Everyone is welcome to help record biodiversity—please speak to Michael to get involved. We are looking for pollinators, nesting birds, and mammals. (A small rock pond is also under consideration).
- **Financial Considerations:** We ask the PCC to consider a recommended donation of £125 to Eco Church (information pack was sent to us). A modest budget is requested for compost and bedding plants to fill our donated large planters.
- **Remembrance Roses:** Plans remain on hold while we review projected costs (approx. £250 per bush).

Special Thanks

Our sincere thanks go to the volunteers and the City Council Green Spaces team. Your hard work ensures St. Mary's remains a sacred, beautiful, and sustainable sanctuary for all.

Michael Wilcox

Occasional Offices

Across the parish in 2025 we conducted:

27 baptisms!

5 weddings

18 funerals

Pastoral Care

The pastoral care of the parish encompasses so many different elements, from home visits, care home services, keeping in touch with people, praying with the dying and supporting our church family throughout different seasons of life.

It has been a privilege to continue to minister to those who are unable to get to church any more by taking Home Communion, spending time chatting and of course praying for one another. Over the past year myself, Rev Lydia and Rev Gill have continued to visit people across the parish. It has been a joy to see the Pastoral Care Team be established, a big thank you to all those who now go out to visit individuals and households whether it be to take Communion, to have a chat or even playing a game of scrabble.

The bumper newsletters have continued to be sent out to those in our church family who are house bound, a big thank you to Christina Weldon for doing this. I know just how much it means to them all to still see what is happening at church and being able to pray for it.

Visits to Clifton View, Clifton Manor and Kingfisher Court have been taking place monthly with four services happening each month. It has been great to see those relationships continue to grow between the parish and the care homes that we visit. We still love to welcome Clifton View on a Wednesday morning at the Drop In for a cup of tea and slice of cake, as well as us all joining together for worship and prayer at the end.

Lydia and I have also been able to go and pray with those at the end of their lives, to anoint them and ask for God's peace, it is a really special thing that we are able to do for those at the close of their days.

Pastoral care remains an important part of our ministry to the parish, thank you to all those who are involved in this ministry and as always please come to us if there is anyone that needs any extra support.

Rev Esther Hutchinson

Prayer

Prayer continues to be the power house of what we do in Clifton, it is so important and underpins all that is going on. Over the past year we have continued to pray regularly on Tuesday evenings at 7pm, we've taken Prayer Walks around the parish, began our Wake and Pray at 7am on a Tuesday and Thursday mornings, and meeting weekly for Midday Prayer at St Mary's. Prayer is the space where we are able to share with God what is on our hearts and is the time where we allow God to speak to us. Time for us to be led by God and to see what it is that God is calling us to next.

As we move forward in all that God has for us we must continue to lean on him in prayer and be ready to listen to his voice.

Rev Esther Hutchinson

Small Groups

2025 saw a push in discipleship across the parish and in response to this the launch of four new small groups across the parish which have been meeting monthly and then weekly in holy seasons of Lent and Advent.

SALT has also continued to meet weekly, with new people joining in monthly as well. A big thank you goes out to the leaders of these groups for facilitating the sessions. Over the months those groups have looked at topics like what the body of Christ means, prayer and God at work.

Through Advent the small groups spent time journeying through Advent following the different characters of the Christmas narrative, exploring what it all means to us today.

As well as the small groups taking place, earlier in the year Next Steps and Moving On took place, helping people to explore what faith meant to them and what those next steps of faith mean as well. For some people this led to Confirmation at the Minster at Pentecost which was a really joyful event.

The Bible course also took place in the autumn, taking people on a journey through the Bible from Genesis right through to Revelation, seeing where God has been at work throughout the story of God's people.

If you haven't already been a part of a small group why not ask for more details!

***Andy Brown – LLM
and Rev Esther Hutchinson***

APPENDIX 1

Minutes of the APCM 20.5.2024

Welcome – Rev Lydia welcomed everyone

Worship – There was a short time of worship based on Peter 2:4-10 and we sang In Christ Alone.

Apologies – Clare Ashton, Ronald and Beryl Hancock, Christine Marshall

Minutes of last meeting

AMP – Annual Meeting of Parishioners

Church Wardens – We thanked the Church Wardens with a special thank you to Clare and Ron for their amazing efforts as Churchwarden and Deputy Churchwarden over the years.

Election of Church Wardens – Richard Harvey, Kevin Lancashire and Shirley Wheatley were duly elected.

APCM

Electoral Roll – started again this year.... At 107. Lots of people came off who I haven't seen in 5 years, but still got up to just over 100 people – great news!

(For current numbers, 12 standard PCC members + deanery synod reps + wardens + licensed lay ministers)

PCC Report

Finance Report & Appt of Independent Examiner –

Joanne shared that our expenses currently outweigh our income but we are getting by.

£39k had been spent on the roof at HTwSF with £12k coming in grants.

£6k had been spent on drapes at HTwSF with almost the whole amount being covered by a grant.

£46k had been spent on the drain works at St Mary's with shares being cashed in to finance a portion.

Joanne proposed we accept the account. Richard Harvey seconded the proposal and all were in favour.

We appointed David Simpkin as an independent examiner and asked Joanne to share the challenges moving forwards.

We thanked Joanne for all the work she puts into this roll, that has grown significantly since she took it on!

Deanery Synod Report

Safeguarding – Clifton Parish makes the most referrals to the Diocesan Safeguarding team out of all the parishes in the diocese. We thanked the safeguarding team for all their hardwork.

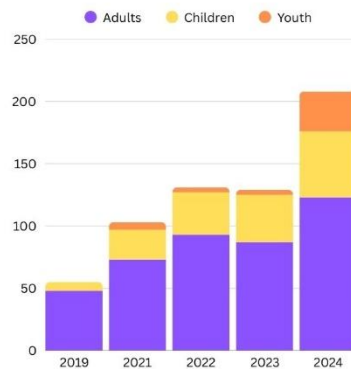
Parish Activities – We said a HUGE thank you to each and every person who contributes to the life of the church.

Parish Report / Vision Setting

Lydia shared some changes that have happened: Messy Church stopped and Kids' Church & Youth Café started. She reported that people coming more often on a Sunday and really committing and getting involved and that new volunteers and leaders are emerging.

Lydia showed a graph of where we're at in terms of worship:

Number of people regularly engaged in worship
(attending once a month or more).



And showed our latest Growing Disciples Plan which we report to the diocese once a term.

Lydia shared that one huge challenge in sustaining ministry as it is now and hopefully, God willing, growing things further in order to reach even more people with God's love is the finances and encouraged us that when we give to God through his church we are really contributing to something which is beyond what we could ever achieve with our money ourselves. Each pound that we give is investing in lives and in growing God's kingdom now and into eternity. It's helping people to find a faith which we know will make all the difference in the world. And she encouraged those who don't give regularly to take on a monthly s/o and those that do give regularly to consider increasing their giving. At the same time as trying to bolster our internal giving, we are continuing to look to external funders. Our reserves are now quite depleted after building works.

Lydia shared that the vision for the next 5 years contains no answers or big plans but more areas of, that God is helping us to see things differently:

- HTwSF mission ground –
busy, accessible, loving, reaching out
- St Mary's sanctuary –
place of retreat to spend time with God.

- Taking church out to the people –
to those who don't yet know they want to hear about Jesus and to those who do know but find it difficult to get to church.

Lydia shared that Penny Carrier and Andy Brown would be licensed as LLMs later that year and that we were hoping for funding to employ a further children and families' worker.

Esther shared her thoughts on St Mary's moving forwards as a place of reflection – and the discipleship pathways that are coming into place.

Penny highlighted the good things happening within children and families work and spoke about the challenges of the pathways in terms of childrens and families work and the gaps there are to fill:

- Toddlers and Toast ----- ?
- ? ----- Kids' Church
- Youth Café ----- Youth Church?
- Sunday groups celebrations and challenges
- Need for more volunteers and leaders....

SWOT Analysis – we collected SWOT ideas from everyone to take to the next PCC meeting.

Election of PCC Members and 1 Deanery Synod Rep

- Hannah Cartwright was duly elected to stand on Deanery Synod for 1 year.
 - Clare and John already on Deanery Synod
- **12 standard PCC members:**
 - Gareth North – Secretary
 - Joanne Naaktgeboren – Treasurer
 - Ian Croft – Dep Warden - HTwSF
 - Michael Wilcox – Dep Warden – St Mary's
- 8 standard places left so we went to a vote and Christina Weldon, Jane Jones, Rose Brown, Margaret Curl, Rebecca North, Michelle Williams, Kate Wilson, Tom Johnson were duly elected.

Any Other Business - none

Ending – We closed by singing Be Thou My Vision and used our closing prayer from Fun @ 4.