



**ST PAUL'S
WIMBLEDON
PARKSIDE**

Annual Report 2025



**Parochial Church Council
St Paul's Church
Wimbledon Parkside**

Cover picture: Jessica Wehrle (l.) and Isla Campbell (r.) enjoy face painting at the annual St Paul's Christmas Fair, 22nd November 2025.

*Report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2025 of the
Ecclesiastical Parish of St Paul's Wimbledon Parkside
118-120 Augustus Road, London SW19 6EW
Presented on the 17th May 2026
Reporting period 1st January - 31st December 2025*

Registered Charity 1142917

Parish Ministry Report

This year has been marked by a quiet but unmistakable sense of growth – growth not only in numbers, but in depth of relationship, in shared purpose, and in the life we are discovering and building together as a parish.

Since 2020, our vision has been *to be a growing community where God is found in the beauty and joy of our worship, the warmth of our welcome, the breadth of our outreach, and our love for our neighbour*. Increasingly, that vision feels embodied in our common life. The congregation carries a real sense of hope, reflected particularly in the growing presence of families and working professionals within the parish.

Worship and the Life of Faith

Worship remains at the heart of St Paul's. The rhythm of the Church year - Holy Week, Easter, Advent, and Christmas - has once again provided shared experiences of depth, beauty, and shared meaning, with strong and engaged attendance.

We celebrated baptisms across much of the year, alongside a wedding within the parish family, marking important moments of joy and commitment. We also gathered for a number of funerals, including the thanksgiving for the life of a much-loved and longstanding member of the congregation, Violet (Ossie) Oswick, who almost reached her 101st year. These occasions continue to remind us that the Church holds together the full breadth of human experience.

Attendance has continued to grow steadily, particularly since the reintroduction of Junior Church in October. It has also been encouraging to see younger members of the congregation - Harry, Charlie, Jamie, and Manu - develop into confident and capable acolytes and junior servers, contributing meaningfully to the life of our worship.

We were also grateful this year for the ministry of those who have enriched our preaching and presiding. We welcomed Bishop Christopher for a parish conversation in February and give thanks for his visit to St Paul's in March, when he presided and preached. The Venerable Carol Coslett joined us both for that conversation and again in October as our preacher. We were also delighted to welcome Mark Oakley, Dean of Southwark Cathedral, who preached for us in April. These occasions

offered depth, encouragement, and connection to the wider life of the Church.

Pastoral Care and Community Life

Pastoral care has taken on greater weight this year, with several members of the congregation facing illness and vulnerability. At the same time, there has been a deepening of mutual support and attentiveness within the community, strengthening the sense of shared life.

The PCC engaged thoughtfully this year with questions of **Racial Justice**, committing to include Inclusive Church as a standing item on future agendas. We have also given careful attention to safeguarding and security. A Safeguarding Committee has been established, and plans are in place for the installation of CCTV, supported by a grant from the Nind's Trust. We are grateful for the guidance of the Diocese and the support of the local police in this work, which underpins our commitment to being both a welcoming and a safe church.

Families and Working Professionals

Growth among young families and working professionals has been one of the most encouraging developments of the year. The re-establishment of **Junior Church** has played an important role in this, helping to nurture a sense of belonging and participation.

We have celebrated a number of **baptisms** – Benjamin, Louis, Anna, Tomasso, and Alec - and also the confirmation of Liz and Rachel, reflecting engagement with faith across different stages of life.

Our relationships with **local schools** continue to strengthen. Communion services at St Cecilia's School have resumed on a half-termly basis, and our partnership with Albermarle School has deepened through assemblies, visits, and performances hosted at St Paul's. These connections remain central to our presence in the wider community.

Our **Wednesday Club** for 9-14 year olds has grown over the past year, offering a valued space for fellowship and connection. Alongside this, **Tea & Toys** - our Tuesday group for children aged 0-3 and their parents and carers - continues to flourish as a place of welcome and support.

Looking ahead, there is a clear sense of call to invest further in this area, with the hope of appointing a dedicated youth and children's worker as resources allow.

Signs of Hope and the Year Ahead

There are many signs of encouragement: steady numerical growth, deepening engagement in worship and learning, and a strengthening sense of belonging across the parish.

We seek to continue nurturing growth among children, families and working professionals, while also developing opportunities for adult faith formation and learning.

Underlying all of this is a desire to continue becoming the kind of community described in our vision: a place where God is encountered in worship, in welcome, and in love for neighbour.

While the year has brought its challenges, there is a quiet but steady confidence that God is at work amongst us, drawing people together and opening new possibilities for the life of St Paul's.

Thanksgivings

We give thanks for the many people whose generosity and commitment sustain the life of St Paul's. We are grateful to those who have led Sunday Evening Prayer over the past year: Revd Jack Belloli, Margaret Brown, David Gooderson, Eve Speare and Norman Allen.

Our heartfelt thanks go to our dedicated staff team: Churchwardens Gill Thompson and Mike Lowe, our Assistant Curate Revd Jack Belloli, our Lay Reader Norman Allen, our Parish Administrator Guy Booth and our Community Centre Manager Sam Egan.

We give thanks for our Finance Team: Gillian Jago, and Sylvia Mpawula who retired at the end of the year with our sincere thanks for her service.

We are grateful to the very talented Kevin Jones, Director of Music, and to our dedicated choir for their musical leadership.

We thank all who serve in our regular ministries: welcomers coordinated by Doreen Hewitt; readers and intercessors, coordinated by Eve Speare; altar servers, co-ordinated by Claire Neate; and the flower arranging team, coordinated by Doreen Hewitt.

We give thanks for the hospitality team, led by Juliet Childs, and for the housekeeping team – the Woolgars, Hewitts, and Thompsons.

Particular thanks are due to those supporting our work with children and young people: the Junior Church leaders, especially Lesley Hazel and

Anne Minors, and the Wednesday Club leaders, including Revd Jack Belloli, Anne Minors, Shanta Chellappoo and Benoît Boelen.

Grateful thanks too, go to our newly established Safeguarding Committee whose work has grown significantly this past year: Helena Butcher (convenor), Claire Neate and Ann Parkin (Safeguarding Officers), Caroline Wehrle, Gill Thompson, Mike Lowe and Revd Susan.

We are also grateful for all our Pantry volunteers and especially the leaders - Juliet Childs, Paul Tibbs, as well as Cathy Smith, who has moved away from the parish. We also give thanks for David Hince, who retired in the new year, with gratitude for his many contributions to the Pantry and the Community Hub.

We also offer particular thanks to those whose work is often unseen but deeply valued. We are grateful to Sebastiaan Boelen and Jamie Crooke for their faithful oversight of the A/V system, enabling us to reach those who are unable to be physically present and extending the life of our worship beyond the church building. We also give thanks to Alan and Jenny Bryant, and to Mike Lowe and again Sebastiaan, for the many practical and often unheralded tasks they have undertaken over the year. Their willingness to give time and skill so generously has not only supported the smooth running of the parish but has also saved the church a significant amount in costs.

To all who contribute to the life of the parish, in ways both seen and unseen, we offer our sincere thanks.

Outreach Overview

Outreach at St Paul's continues to reflect a commitment to being a visible, welcoming, and engaged presence within the local community. Across the year, this is expressed through both major annual events and the steady rhythm of weekly activities. The Summer Fête and Christmas Fair remain important occasions in the life of the parish, bringing together church members and the wider community in a spirit of hospitality and shared participation. The Christmas Fair, supported by a large team of volunteers, continues to be our largest fundraising event, with funds in 2025 directed towards supporting and developing our children's and youth ministry. Alongside this, our links with local schools continue to grow through collective worship, visits, Faith Trails, and Faith Direct initiatives.

A range of regular groups also provide important points of connection across different generations. Open Church continues to offer a valued space for quiet reflection and prayer during the week, although volunteer capacity has recently limited how often the building can be open. Work with children, young people, families, and older members of the community continues through groups such as Tea & Toys, Tea & Toast, St Paul's Wednesday Club, and the Lunch Club, each fostering friendship, support, and community in different ways. The Pantry and Community Centre also remain significant expressions of the church's practical care and local presence. Together, these activities reflect a pattern of relational outreach sustained by a committed network of volunteers and community members, with further detail provided in the reports that follow.

Youth and Children's Ministry Report

Ministry with children and young people has continued to be a growing and encouraging area of parish life over the past year. Alongside steady participation, there has been a deepening sense of confidence, belonging, and engagement among families.

Baptisms: We celebrated five baptisms during 2025, including those of Benjamin, Louis, Tomasso, Anna and Alec, marking significant moments of welcome and belonging. While there was no First Communion preparation this year, there is a clear intention to develop this in the coming year as part of supporting children's ongoing faith formation.

Junior Church was relaunched in October 2025 and meets weekly during the main Sunday service, with up to 10 children attending regularly and approximately 20 on the register. The group is largely made up of children aged 8 and under, gathered as a single mixed-age group. Sessions are shaped around storytelling, craft, music and prayer, seeking to offer a lively and accessible introduction to the Christian faith. The children's work at Christmas and Easter has again been a particular joy, with creative work shared in church and contributing visibly to the worshipping life of the parish.

Most families involved in Junior Church are drawn from within the congregation, and there is a growing willingness among parents to take a more active role in church life, including through volunteering in Junior Church and other areas of ministry. This is strengthening

relationships and contributing to a shared sense of ownership across the parish.

Messy Church: Alongside Sunday morning provision, Messy Church on first Sunday afternoons continues to provide an important space for children and families, including older children and (until recently) early teenagers. This has begun to open up new possibilities for youth engagement. There are early signs of interest among some young people in shaping their own activities, including a proposed sleep-out and a cycling fundraiser in support of Glass Door Homeless Charity, with Harry, Charlie, Josh and their families helping with planning and fundraising.

Youth provision: We are also exploring connections with wider church youth provision, especially Youth Ministry In Communion (YMIC) which offers occasional larger-scale activities for secondary school students in the Kingston Episcopal Area, recognising both the opportunities and the current limitations of what we can offer locally. The appointment of a Youth and Children's Worker will be key to enabling this ministry to grow and develop further.

Youth and Children's ministry is sustained by the dedication and generosity of a significant number of volunteers. **Junior Church** is led by Lesley Hazel and Anne Minors, with assistance from Florence Felis, Candice Andrade, Gillian Jago, Rachel Barnes as well as other parents. **Messy Church** benefits from the leadership of Caroline Wehrle, Marc Stoneham, Benoît Boelen, Mike Bower, Claire Neate, alongside parental support and the involvement of Revd Jack and Revd Susan as well as the pizza acquisition support of Sebastiaan Boelen. This breadth of involvement is a significant strength and reflects a shared commitment to nurturing younger members of our community.

Schools: We are grateful for our ongoing links with local schools, including St Cecilia's CE Secondary School and Albemarle Primary School. We host the annual Christmas carol services for Putney High School and The Study Prep Wimbledon, and we both host and participate in Faith Trails visits by local schools organised by SACRE. We also take part in Faith Direct, hosted at Wandsworth Town Hall, which brings together secondary school students and faith leaders from a range of faith traditions. In a series of short, timed conversations, students rotate between tables, spending time with each faith representative, asking

questions and exploring beliefs and practices. The format creates a lively and open space for curiosity, dialogue and mutual understanding.

Safeguarding continues to underpin all aspects of this work in line with parish policies, diocesan requirements and good practice.

Looking ahead, our priorities are to continue building both in numbers and in depth of engagement, to establish a more regular and sustainable youth group, and to support the faith development of children and young people in ways that enable them to participate more fully in the life of the Church. What we have seen this year suggests that the foundations are firmly in place for this next stage of growth.

The Revd Susan Bolen

Churchwardens' Report (including Fabric Report)

The number of people attending church services has increased again during the year and livestreaming continues to be an important part of our worship. The average attendance at the Sunday morning Eucharist service is 62, a slight increase on last year. The church continued to be open during the week for visitors and for private reflection and prayer which, although the numbers are modest, is appreciated by those who come in. There continues to be a midday Eucharist service on Wednesday each week attended by a small number of regular members.

We launched the **Mission Action Plan (MAP)** at the APCM in May 2024, and it continues to guide our direction and strategy. The MAP presents our vision in five headings: (i) welcome; (ii) nurture; (iii) outreach; (iv) communications; and (v) environment. Here is a bit more detail, with updates on progress under these headings:

- **Welcome:** welcome packs, improve outside appearance, re-site notice boards, welcome meals. We have held several lunches to welcome newcomers in the Community Centre and in private homes. We have replaced the fence on Augustus Road and reconstructed the notice board; application is in process to upgrade the notice board in the foyer. The pantry area has been tidied, and the donations and vision information is now provided near the main entrance.
- **Nurture:** organise retreats as well as quiet days, re-establish Junior Church, film screenings with discussions to nurture faith.

Junior Church has been started again, is well attended and is running successfully. The number of children coming to Sunday morning services has increased noticeably. Our all-age **Messy Church**, run on the first Sunday each month, continues to thrive. As in past years, we celebrated 'Creationtide' in the church with the display board showing a variety of art and interpretations by members of the congregation.

- **Outreach:** additional interests to add to what we are already doing - concerts organised by St Paul's and outside hires, building on our rich musical tradition led by our very talented Musical Director, re-establish a Social Committee. We have run several social events, including a quiz, which was well attended, and a **Summer Fête** in July, both of which were well attended. Our **Christmas Fair** in November was widely attended by members of the local community; it raised £4,000. **Tea & Toys** on Tuesday mornings continues and the number attending is encouraging. We have engaged in joint meetings from time to time with the local synagogue and mosque. St Cecilia's Secondary School visited twice during the year by House Group for 'Worship in the Community'. We also hosted visits from primary schools as part of the Wandsworth Faith Trails. **St Paul's Pantry** continues to serve those in need fortnightly on Thursdays; this is a large commitment, for which we are grateful to both food donors and volunteers.
- **Communications:** re-launch the website on the new ChurchDesk platform, develop social media, set up focus group for review and refresh of **Parkside Post**. The website has been revised and updated substantially.
- **Environment:** eco-committee to pursue energy audit and solar panels, pursue the A Rocha Eco-Church award scheme, community gardening project, seek sources for grant support. The energy audit was done; subsequent discussion drew up a wish-list of energy-saving projects. The feasibility of these is being investigated, but critically it will be necessary to find substantial funds in order to be able to progress significant improvements.

Also, we have set up a **Safeguarding Committee** to oversee all aspects of safeguarding within the church. The committee meets on a regular basis, engages with the Diocesan Safeguarding Office, and reports to the PCC.

We have become a bit bolder in seeking financial support for the church, through more prominent information about giving and easy-donation options of QR codes and contactless donation machines. Whereas we don't want to impose, and all are welcome irrespective of giving, we need also to be open that the church does not receive external funding from any source, so we are totally dependent on donations of the congregation and visitors. The pursuit of our **Mission Action Plan (MAP)**, as well as running of many activities, is dependent on us being able to increase our income.

Our sincere thanks to all the members of the congregation who give so much of their time to make all these things thrive.

Fabric Report

Following the 5-year survey of the electrical system for the church and Community Centre, which was done in April 2024, and the mandatory follow-up remediation done in 2024, we undertook one of the non-mandatory items in 2025, which was to install surge-protection; this is to protect electronic equipment from the risk of damage by electric current surges - we were particularly concerned to protect the AV system. The next inspection will be in 2029.

We are still awaiting our quinquennial report; despite many interventions from the clergy and staff the report is now 2 years overdue.

As mentioned above, the fence in Augustus Road has been replaced and the noticeboard at the corner of Augustus Road and Inner Park Road has been refurbished.

Gill Thompson and Mike Lowe

Electoral Roll

We completely revised the Church Electoral Roll of St Paul's before last years' Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM). At that meeting, the Electoral Roll number was 85.

Today, the Electoral Roll of St. Paul's Church Wimbledon Parkside, Wandsworth, stands at 109.

Very sadly, we have lost some of our faithful members this year, but there is an increase in roll numbers because new people have joined.

Electoral Roll members are able to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), to stand for the Parochial Church Council (PCC), or stand for election as a Churchwarden. Do please consider it.

Joan Endean (Mrs), Electoral Roll Officer

Junior Church

Junior Church restarted in October 2025 under the leadership of Anne Minors and Lesley Hazel. There are 4 active helpers including 3 parents: Helen Lewis, Florence Leung, Anca Milotin and Candice Andrade. The adults attending with their charge give a helping hand. There are over 20 children on the register but attendance varies between 2-10 children, usually of the youngest age group.

Initially, 'Diddy Disciples' was used to plan the sessions held during the Sunday service but the Lectionary-led 'Roots' course was soon adopted via the bi-monthly magazine, as well as the online version which provides extra resources. Leaders also invent activities and produce resources, as well as adapt well known children's songs to fit the topic. Various items have been acquired to aid learning and enjoyment.

Action, quiet games and activities, along with songs and craft, help the children understand important messages found in the very simplified stories. As well as learning, the children and parents have fun and forge new friendships through working together. It is hoped that in future the numbers will grow with more regular attendance.

Lesley Hazel and Anne Minors

Parish Safeguarding

St Paul's Church continues to follow safeguarding policies for children and vulnerable adults established by the Diocese of Southwark.

The Diocese provides online courses, covering 'Basic' and 'Foundation' in safeguarding, as well as training to raise awareness of domestic abuse and safer recruitment best practice for those who need to comply.

During 2025 we saw improved adherence to guidelines on safer recruitment for our volunteers. Face-to-face proof of identity checks are being carried out as part of the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS). DBS checks are required every 3 years.

We still continue to encourage staff and volunteers to complete safeguarding training online. Ann Parkin remains on standby for whenever assistance is required.

Claire Neate, St Paul's Safeguarding Officer

Friday Group

We meet regularly to share each other's joys and concerns, and to offer support to one another. We pray for people in need, specific situations, and we study a book. This may be a part of the Bible, or a book giving us food for thought on our pilgrimage through life together. We have lively discussions, and have a chance to share our insights, joys, and doubts.

Sue Chick

Prayer Chain

We are a group of people who pray for anyone in need. There is a list we all hold and anyone can add people to that list - just contact Sue Chick, Daphne Foster or any of the clergy team and we will pray for those in need. It would also be helpful to know of any changes or if the person no longer needs to be on the prayer list.

Daphne Foster/Sue Chick

Church Birthday Card Scheme

We give a birthday card to anyone from St Paul's who would like their birthday celebrated in this way. Their name also appears on the pew sheet in the relevant month. If you wish to receive a card for yourself or your family members, please contact Daphne Foster or Sue Chick. We don't need to know ages, but if we have the age of children we can try to find an appropriate card for their age.

We are now finding it hard to write cards due to arthritic joints so if anyone would like to take over we'd be very grateful.

Daphne Foster/Sue Chick

Jean Garling Fund

This fund, set up in memory of Jean with a bequest from her estate, is available for lay members of the congregation for training to support their spiritual development. Unfortunately, this year we have had no

applications to the fund. However, going forward we are hoping to be able to continue supporting anyone needing help towards training which enhances the life of our church community.

Isabel Heycock & Doreen Hewitt

Music

We have been settling into a more regular pattern of choir singing a fairly simple communion anthem most weeks, followed by a communion hymn, but with variable choir numbers this can sometimes be quite challenging. Pleasing, though, that even when few in number, singers seem able to rise to the challenge! Again we have welcomed some new voices and are delighted that others are able to join us for special occasions, such as Midnight Mass at Christmas, and at Easter.

Both hymns and anthems are chosen to represent a variety of periods and styles, ancient and modern. Impossible, of course, to please everyone all of the time, but we are grateful for frequent positive feedback from members of the congregation.

The organ continues its slow decline with significant notes on both the Great and Positive manuals packing up, leaving the Swell as the only reliable manual. Work-arounds are possible but it can be challenging, especially if a problem presents itself mid-voluntary! We are hopeful that significant repair work can be carried out in the near future.

Kana has started up a fledgling junior choir which rehearses before Messy Church on the first Sunday of the month and occasionally contributes to a main service. What the choir sometimes lacks in numbers is amply compensated by the infectious and inspiring enthusiasm of the young singers!

Thanks to all choir members for their loyal support, and especially to John for his tireless commitment helping to copy music, organise the choir music library, and help with setting up; to Ann for dealing with music licence reporting and copyright; to Susan, Jack and Churchwardens for their support, and to members of the congregation and visitors who have made a point of thanking and complementing St Paul's musicians for our contribution to services.

Kevin Jones

Flower Group

Another busy year for the flower team with flowers in church week by week, and a number of special occasions including a wedding in August. Sadly we had funerals as well, including one for a Lunch Club regular in December which gave us the opportunity to produce suitable arrangements without flowers. The large pedestals with seasonal greenery, berries and fir cones proved rather popular with the congregation, so perhaps this could be a new way to decorate the church at Christmas time.

The Flower Fund has benefited from the two very popular Flower and Craft mornings, when generous donations meant expenses for the mornings were covered and the extra monies went towards the Easter and Christmas flowers.

Thanks as ever to those gardeners who regularly provide us with much needed greenery; it is very welcome and much appreciated. My thanks to the team for their support and their continued generosity with their materials, time and talent.

Doreen Hewitt

Youth and Children

Tea & Toys continues to welcome parents and carers on Tuesday mornings, with 5-10 families coming each week: most are now weekly attendees, for whom it is an important space of friendship and mutual support for the adults, and one of growing confidence for the children. Many are now attending Messy Church more regularly, a few have occasionally attended Sunday morning Holy Communion services, and some have engaged with our Lunch Club through special community activities such as the Posada. We are grateful to Katie Bondar for continuing to facilitate this space, joined this year by Benoît Boelen, who end the sessions with songs and games. Katie also organised a farewell 'sports day' session in July to send off those preparing to start school that autumn!

In the autumn term of 2025, we experimented with moving Tea & Toast - our informal after-school provision in church for 5-9 year-olds and their carers - from Wednesday afternoons, where it was in competition for attention with the Wednesday Club, to Mondays, to sit alongside the

already-scheduled Open Church. Take-up continues to be very minimal, and this aspect of our provision enters 2026 in hiatus, as our clergy and PCC consider how to resource our children's and youth work as a whole.

The Wednesday Club for 9-14 year-olds has expanded since autumn 2025, with over 20 young people registered and 12-16 coming every week: most of the young people are in Year 6, and there has been a strong emerging culture of friends inviting friends week by week. When asked about what they enjoy about the Club, the young people are quick to mention the sports available, including football, badminton, basketball and table tennis; the regular structured activities, especially baking; and the chance to spend time with friends in a more relaxed setting than school. Members of the Club were also involved in leading activities as part of the Community Centre's Summer Fête (with thanks to Sam Egan for offering structured support) and the Christmas Fair - we hope to build on this engagement this year. A special thanks goes to Margaret Brown, whose patient, sustained efforts have enabled Wednesday Club not only to continue, but to flourish as a place of friendship, welcome and shared belonging. Margaret has recently needed to step back from her role for personal reasons, and she leaves Wednesday Club with our sincere thanks for all she has given. We are grateful also to Shanta Chellappoo, Helen Lewis, Anne Minors and Claire Neate for their faithful support for the Club alongside the clergy and Benoît.

Katie and Benoît are paid as casual workers for their hours at these activities: this has been part funded by a Fresh Expressions micro-grant from the Diocese's Children and Young People's Team. We are also now drawing on the last of the funds received from the Wimbledon Foundation Community Fund in 2023. We continue to seek new sources of funding - as well as volunteers - for this important work for our parish: please keep it in your hearts and prayers!

Revd Dr Jack Belloli, Assistant Curate

Community Hub

The Community Hub met on Thursday mornings throughout 2025 as an informal space of welcome and hospitality, over free refreshments and light activities. The intention was to develop our outreach to the whole

of our local community, and to develop intergenerational links drawing on members of other groups such as Tea & Toys and Lunch Club.

While the space retained a small loyal group of 3 to 5 attendees in 2025, numbers declined in 2026 and the decision was made to bring the Hub to a close early this year. This was necessary due to a lack of sustained growth in line with our original aims despite advertising to other groups and in Parkside Post, and the volunteer investment that it required. We are pleased to say that some of these attendees have become involved with Lunch Club instead, and some of the Hub's aims are now being met by the external hires coming in its place.

We are grateful to David Hince and Isabel Heycock for their support as key volunteers - as well as to Sam Egan for support with set-up and refreshments.

Revd Dr Jack Belloli, Assistant Curate

St Paul's Pantry

The Pantry was attended by, on average, 32 households each time during 2025. Pantry visitors come from all age groups: single households, couples, families - there is no 'typical' Pantry household. Some come very regularly; others come when they feel the need.

Visitors receive a form listing available items (non-perishable food and non-food) and can choose what they need. They are also offered a bag of fruit and vegetables which are donated by City Harvest and Bayley & Sage, as well as other items received from them, such as bread. Rosie's Bakery has also been supplying the Pantry with bread, pastries etc., but sadly this arrangement came to an end in July when it came under new management.

David Hince made a significant contribution during the year, receiving deliveries and doing the set up, and regularly acting as 'leader' of the volunteer team on Pantry evenings. We were so grateful for his help, but at the end of the year David stepped back. Cathy Smith joined the team of 'leaders' but in November she moved to Woking to be nearer to her family.

Otherwise, we have a regular team of around 20 regular volunteers who are on a rota. Volunteers come and go, according to their commitments, however, so we are always interested to hear from

anybody who would like to join the team, either by helping on a Thursday evening or by being in church on a Thursday morning to help receive supplies. We need more than one person in church at all times for safeguarding reasons.

The *ambiance* on Pantry evenings is always positive and supportive. One of our regular visitors commented at the end of the year *'I always feel like we are with friends when we come to the Pantry.'*

Juliet Childs

Open Church

Open Church has continued throughout most of 2025, offering a welcoming and peaceful space for around two hours each day during the week. This simple but meaningful provision has been deeply valued by the wider community - whether for quiet reflection, prayer, or just a moment of stillness in a busy day - and has strengthened our connection with those beyond our regular congregation.

However, as I write, we are finding it increasingly difficult to sustain this important ministry due to a shortage of available volunteers. Without additional support, its future remains uncertain. We would welcome offers from anyone able to give a couple of hours a week on a regular basis to help us keep our doors open to the community.

Revd Jack Belloli and Revd Susan Bolen

Community Centre

We are pleased to say that St Paul's Community Centre continues to be a warm and welcoming place for all those that use it, either for hiring or visiting. We continue to receive great feedback.

We remain a very popular venue for children's parties, especially with our accessible outdoor space, easy access, facilities for wheelchair users, and adequate roadside parking.

We have a wide range of regular groups attending St Paul's Community Centre, offering a great variety of activities: playgroup, Girl Guides, Lunch Club (for the elderly), First Class Learning, Dementia Group, Dog Club, Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra (SYO), Wednesday Club (for ages 11-

14), table tennis, yoga and ballroom dancing. There's something for everyone of all ages.

As we all know, there is always an endless list of maintenance to ensure the building is not just safe but also in a good state of repair. On that note, we would like to thank Alan and Jenny Bryant for their continued help and support with maintenance again this year. It is as always very much appreciated.

Money raised from our bingo sessions on a Tuesday, Summer Fête and various other activities, has enabled us to start freshening up the paint work in the main hall this year. We would like to thank Steve for his continued help and support with this, which seems like an endless job.

In July, our Summer Fête was a great success and well attended. The total raised for the event was £ 881.63. We also received many generous donations from the church community and from Sambrook's Brewery. A huge thank you to all those who donated funding and gave their time on the day.

In October, we were successful for the fifth year in securing funding as part of the Well-being Brighter Living week in Wandsworth, receiving £250.00. The Centre Manager organised an afternoon of activities for the elderly including a light lunch of soup and rolls, chair yoga and games. This enabled us to purchase a wheel of fortune which we used on the day and can be used at future events.

St Paul's joined forces with Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Association in November to run a successful Macmillan coffee morning. We're pleased to say we raised £300.00 to support people living with cancer.

Samantha Egan and Gill Thompson

Lunch Club

Lunch Club continues to offer lunch to elderly members of the community on Tuesdays from 11.30 am to 2.00 pm. We meet in the Community Centre and provide a two-course lunch on the first, third and fourth Tuesday of the month. Sam Egan volunteers on the second Tuesday by offering a light lunch. Our current team leaders are Christine Brown, Shirley Thompson and Anne Minors who prepare the menu, do the shopping and lead a team of volunteers to cook and serve the meal.

Our two cooks, Janice O'Connor and Mary Novis continue to work with us assisted by Eve Speare, Jan Sharp, Margaret McManus and Susan Hartwell-Mold. Our thanks to all our volunteers.

The number attending each week ranges between 18-20 members and we very much appreciate and thank Sam Egan for taking the bookings and collecting the money. Lunch Club is usually followed by a bingo session - enjoyed by all who take part. Money raised from this activity goes toward fund raising for the Community Centre.

This year we give a huge thank you to Jan Sharpe and Susan Hartwell-Mold for canvassing the local supermarkets for donations towards our Christmas Lunch. They were very successful, and managed to bring the cost of the lunch down from £15 to £10 per head, which was appreciated by us all. Our thanks go to Waitrose, Asda and Morrisons for their support. Lunch was followed by the singing of Christmas Carols organised by Chris Wright.

We would also like to thank 'Cook' in Southfields, who continue to support us with occasional meals.

Lunch Club is self-funding and is a happy, vibrant community providing a much-needed social space for a group of elderly people. However, for it to continue, we urgently need more volunteers and team leaders who could work once a month on a regular basis. Please speak with Christine or Shirley if you think you could help in any way.

Christine Brown and Shirley Thompson

Church Bookings: Concerts & Recitals

St Paul's remains a popular venue for public concerts and recitals. We are blessed with the patronage of a loyal group of amateur orchestras and choirs, whose members appreciate our flexible facilities, personal service and the church's excellent acoustic qualities.

In 2025 we hosted 5 orchestral concerts and 4 choral recitals, as well as 4 separate choir rehearsals. We also had 6 schools' concerts, and 2 piano student recitals. Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra (SYO) rehearsed in the church on 5 Sunday afternoons. We also hired out the church as venue for a Wandsworth Council Community Drop-in event on 14th June.

We increased our hire charges by between 3-4% at the beginning of the year to account for inflation. Our total income from church hire in 2025 was over £ 8,000.00, an increase on 2024.

Wimbledon Symphony Orchestra (WSO) performed four seasonal concerts during the year. On 25th January, Mark Prescott conducted WSO with Chloë Meade (Leader) for Fauré's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Dvořák's *Otello*, and Brahms's *Symphony No. 2*. On 5th April the orchestra, conducted by Dominic Grier with Zoe Hodi (Leader) and William Bracken (piano), played Prokofiev's "Classical" *Symphony No 1*, Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat Op 73 ("Emperor")*, and Farrenc's *Symphony No.3 in G minor Op 36 (1847)*. Mark Prescott returned to conduct the Summer Concert on Saturday 14th June, with Anna Brown (Leader) and Yume Tomita (violin), in a programme which included Strauss's *Don Juan*, Barber's *Violin Concerto*, and Elgar's *Symphony No. 1*. The WSO Autumn Concert took place on Saturday 8th November, when John Beswick conducted the orchestra's rendition of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio espagnol*, Bruch's *Violin Concerto No 1 in G minor*, and Sibelius' *Symphony No 1 in E minor*, with Emily Sun on violin.

On Saturday 17th May, Putney Choral Society (PCS) under Musical Director Jamie Powe, with professional soloists and orchestra, performed Mozart's *Requiem*, Pergolesi's *Magnificat*, and Mozart's *Adagio and Fugue in C Minor*. The society returned for their customary Winter Concert on Saturday 6th December, delivering an ambitious and eclectic programme including the distinctively rhythmic *Misa a Buenos Aires (Misatango)*, a mass in tango style by Martin Palmeri; Scarlatti's *Magnificat*, and Haydn's 'Emperor' *Quartet Op. 76 No. 3*. PCS also held three separate rehearsals in church during the year.

We welcomed Wandsworth Symphony Orchestra (WSO) to St Paul's for the first time on 29th November for an Autumn Concert. Conducted by Rupert Bond and under leader Mario Basile, the orchestra played an evening programme including *Symphonic Dances* from Leonard Bernstein's 'West Side Story', De Falla's *The Three-cornered Hat Suites 1 and 2*, *Prélude a l'après midi d'un faune* by Debussy, and Delius' *Walk to the Paradise Garden*.

Albemarle Primary School was in church for year group concerts in the early spring by KS1 and KS2 students, and again on 16th December for a Christmas performance by KS2.

We were delighted as always to host The Study Prep Wimbledon for their Nativity Concert on 4th December; followed soon after on 11th December by Putney High School Juniors, under the direction of Head of Music Lizzie Davis, for their two annual Carol Concerts. The enthusiasm and energy of the children filled our church with joy.

The 2025 concert season was brought to a hearty festive finale on 13th December by Wimbledon Choral Society (WCS), whose annual Christmas Concerts (matinee and evening) were enjoyed by a lively audience in a very full church.

Guy Booth, Parish Administrator

Parkside Post Parish Magazine

Three editions of Parkside Post were produced, for Easter, Creationtide and Advent/Christmas. Preethika Chandran took over the production, using InDesign software, and enhanced the cover of each edition with her own original, attractive artwork. Colourful notices produced using Canva software promoted special services and the various outreach projects of St Paul's. Otherwise, content included an article comparing the significance of Lent with its counterparts in Judaism and Islam - Passover and Ramadan - and a reflection on a visit to the Taizé community by Revd Jack. Advertisers, including Putney Choral Society (PCS), Wimbledon Choral Society (WCS), Wimbledon Symphony Orchestra (WSO), Seasons Art Classes and Kundalini Yoga Classes, helped to defray printing costs.

2,500 copies were printed at the start of the year, but this dropped to 2,000 as some copies could not be distributed due to a shortage of volunteers. More help is needed with distribution. As well as posting through letterboxes, copies were displayed in the Community Centre, at Southfields Library, at local coffee shops and surgeries etc., to try to promote St Paul's in the local area.

Juliet Childs

e-Newsletters

We resumed direct communications to our registered contacts in 2025. We sent 3 group emails ('Revision of the Church Electoral Roll', 'Quiz

Night, Saturday 19th July, *‘See You at Quiz Night Tomorrow’*) and 3 Newsletters (*‘Join Us for our Summer Fête this Saturday’*, *‘There is Still Time to Register for Quiz Night’*, and *‘St Paul’s Christmas Fair is This Saturday 22nd November’*).

The open rate across our all-subscriber messages in 2025 averaged 60%. Click-through rates (to the website) are very dependent on the subject matter, size of the recipient list (full subscriber list or targeted) and structure of the message (e.g. if there is an online registration form to fill in). Our ‘Christmas Fair’ e-Newsletter generated 10% click-thru (30) from 299 sends and a 55% open rate (165), which is reflective of our newsletter performance generally. Much information is usually contained in the body of the message, reducing the need to click-through. Our newsletter subscriber list stood at approximately 300 contacts at the end of 2025 and our total contacts were over 400.

Guy Booth, Parish Administrator

St Paul’s Website

The St Paul’s website was rebuilt and went live early in 2025 on the upgraded ChurchDesk platform. The homepage content reflects our key areas of outreach across both the church and Community Centre and has been regularly updated during the year. The homepage calendar provides a rolling feed of upcoming services and events at the church drawn automatically from the ChurchDesk calendar, including details of concerts by our amateur choirs and orchestras. The ‘News’ section contains features and stories about St Paul’s (both church and Community Centre), important Diocesan news, the latest PDF version of Parkside Post, and messages from our vicar. The pew sheet is uploaded every week under the tab worship/pew-sheets.

The website, which is St Paul’s shop window to the world, generated significant numbers of enquiries by ‘phone and email for Community Centre bookings (birthday parties, groups, clubs) and church hires (concerts, recitals, public meetings), driving revenue. You can visit St Pauls online at: www.stpaulswimbledonparkside.org.uk.

Guy Booth, Parish Administrator

Charity Collections

We raised £1,005.94 for the Glass Door homeless charity from a collection at the Service of Lessons and Carols on 14th December, and two evenings of carol singing, at Southfields tube station and in the Gardens area.

We also collected in church and delivered envelopes in many areas of the parish as part of Christian Aid week in May. It is difficult to know how much was raised as many people would have contributed online.

Margaret Brown

World Day of Prayer

The local service was held this year at St. Paul's on 7th March, and thanks partly to the Lunch Club, there was a record attendance. The service was provided by the women of the Cook Islands on the theme 'I made you wonderful'.

Margaret Brown

Interfaith Relations at St Paul's

Interfaith engagement continues to be a steady and valued strand of our life at St Paul's, reflecting both our local context and our wider diocesan commitments. Over the past year, this work has been characterised by the patient building of relationships, trust, and mutual understanding - taking shape as a growing habit of listening well, and contributing quietly but meaningfully to community cohesion.

Through ongoing connections with local faith leaders and communities, we have sustained a pattern of encounter that is both informal and intentional. This has included attending peace events with the local Ahmadiyya community, visiting Wimbledon Synagogue for a Sabbath service, and welcoming neighbours of other faiths to events at St Paul's. Clergy have also met regularly with local counterparts for conversation and support. Participation in the Wandsworth Multi-faith Forum - bringing together faith leaders from across the borough - has also deepened, both in relationships and in the breadth of representation.

Our engagement is also shaped by wider commitments. Through Revd Susan's role as Co-Chair of the Council of Christians and Jews, St Paul's is connected to national work fostering understanding between Christian and Jewish communities, enriching our local practice. This has supported a more sustained focus on Christian-Jewish relations, alongside a growing awareness of antisemitism and other forms of religious prejudice.

We have also been glad to deepen our relationship with the local Ahmadiyya community, marked by mutual learning and shared support.

Representatives from St Paul's took part in a conversation on the place of faith in public life, held in the Jubilee Room at the Houses of Parliament at the invitation of our local MP, Fleur Anderson. This brought together Rabbi Adrian Schell, Imam Usman Butt and the Revd Susan Bolen, offering a thoughtful and collaborative exploration of the role of faith in our shared civic life. A key theme was the call to recognise the divine in the stranger, and to choose connection over isolation as the place where human flourishing is found. In addition, there have been opportunities to contribute to wider public conversation through interviews on Radio Islam, offering a Christian perspective within an interfaith context.

As Interfaith Advisor within the diocese, Revd Susan's work connects St Paul's to a wider network of relationships and initiatives. Insights gained through diocesan involvement continue to inform parish life, while the experience of St Paul's contributes in turn to the broader conversation.

At its heart, this ministry is about presence: showing up, listening well and remaining open to encounter. It is a quiet but vital expression of our commitment to be a church marked by openness and hospitality.

Revd Susan Bolen

Eco Church

The Eco Church committee met on 3rd April 2025. The main focus was a discussion on the Net Zero Energy Audit report that we had received from the Diocese. The Net Zero Energy Audit had been conducted by a visit to the church on 13th November 2024; we received the report from this visit on 6th March 2025. The majority of the report covered information and ideas that we already had in discussion, nevertheless it

was useful as an independent confirmation of our analyses, and it also included some helpful new suggestions.

In our discussion, we drew up a list of energy-saving action ideas, which we brought to a meeting at our request with the Diocesan energy representative, Jonathan Walter, on 21st May, in the church. The headline items on the list include modifications to enable the use of the Lady Chapel as a separately-heated area during the winter, localised infra-red heating, and installation of solar panels on the roof. All of these will require investigation of feasibility, which is ongoing, and consultation on the technical and aesthetic changes that would be needed. Critically, all ideas would need substantial funding in order to be possible, which we hope could include external support such as grant schemes for energy saving.

Regarding the idea of installing infra-red heating, we have experienced a concert heated very effectively in November by chandeliers at St Bartholomew's Church Orford, containing both infrared heaters and lights. We have tested 2 infrared heating bars for efficiency in a given space; these performed very effectively, indicating good potential for installation in the church.

In the meantime we have experimented with 3 designs of battery-powered heated pew cushions and hand-warmers. These have been used by members of the congregation on Sunday mornings, and may also be used in future winters by church sitters and at other events in the church.

Mike Lowe

IT, A/V and Technical

St Paul's received a grant for the purchase of 2x additional wireless channels (we now have 4, in total) allowing one extra lapel microphone and one handheld microphone.

Another grant was received for the purchase of a (flexible) security camera system consisting of 4 cameras focusing on the church and Community Centre entrances. Installation was completed in early January 2026.

Sebastiaan Boelen

St Paul's PCC - Treasurer's Report 2025

The church continues to benefit from the generosity of the congregation, with donated income remaining strong throughout 2025.

Income from community centre and church hire held up well, alongside rental income from the Augustus Road investment property. The Christmas Fair was a particular highlight, raising over £4,000 for youth work. A grant from the Nind's Trust funded the installation of security cameras, contributing to an ongoing project to improve the safety and security of our buildings.

The Pantry continued its vital work throughout the year, providing practical support to those in need in our local community. We are grateful to all who give their time and money to keep this running.

Expenditure reflects both the ongoing pressures of rising costs and our ambition to grow the work of the church. Our Parish Support Fund contribution, which represents our commitment to the wider Church of England, remains a significant and important part of our outgoings, and increasing it over time remains a priority for the Finance Committee and PCC.

The general fund was broadly flat on the year, and overall we ended 2025 with a deficit of just over £5,000. We remain in a stable financial position and are grateful, as ever, for the continued generosity of the parish.

The Finance Committee

N.B. Please see separate addendum for St Paul's Accounts 2025

