



Christ Church Gipsy Hill

Annual Report

2025

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It is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Philippians 2.13

Over the last couple of years, I have picked up an annual habit from a good friend of mine. In the lazy days between Christmas and New Year, I look back through my photos, choose a selection, and create a photobook for the year.

It's not a radical project, but I've really enjoyed the process of remembering events, holidays and activities by recalling what caught my eye to snap a picture. I notice themes threaded through the year - friendships celebrated on walks or around tables, the same view noticed at different seasons, flowers at various stages of growth and blooming, children that I'm close to growing visibly month by month. It becomes a prayerful time, when I can give thanks for God's faithfulness through the celebrations and the challenges and I can recognise how God has taught me and transformed me through the year. And, to be honest, I can reflect on the times when I've embraced his transformation - and when I've resisted it.



Our annual report is a bit like this.

As a church, we are given the chance to notice the threads God has been weaving through our year - themes of God's faithfulness, and our friendship with Him and one another. We might notice something of God's character that's caught our eye again and again - like an enduringly beautiful view under different weather conditions. We might see something that started as a seed of an idea germinate, grow, and be nurtured into fruitfulness beyond our expectations. We remember how one-off events have given us the chance to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice, and how regular habits of worship, prayer, community and mission have steadied our souls for changing seasons.

God takes the ordinary and the extraordinary things of our lives and they become the site of His work in us. This is true for us as individual followers of Christ, and for us as a church.

I rejoice at the many ways in which God has been at work at Christ Church in 2025. I know that I can only glimpse a small part of all He has done. But what is even more beautiful is that God rejoices in His work among us too. He is taking pleasure in the ways we seek to follow Him, our will and our work, even when those ways are stumbling and shaky.

As you read the reports and prayers below, you might recall how God has been at work in you personally and among the wider church family. Perhaps God might nudge you to encourage or comfort someone by sharing a memory, or prompt your prayers for all the ways in which we seek to serve His mission here at Gipsy Hill.

Thank you for being a part of what God is doing in this time and this place. It is God who is at work within us - praise Him for His grace!

Jenny

Worship and prayer (Jenny D)

THANK YOU to all those who welcome, lead, preach, sing or play, pray, read, and much more. Whether it's at our 10.30 service, at Inspire, at our 9am service or in festival seasons like Christmas and Easter, our worship times reflect the ways in which God gives gifts to all of us in different ways. As we offer these gifts back to him, they are gloriously woven together in multi-faceted praise.



NEWS

- It was wonderful to celebrate at three baptism services this year, welcoming both adults and children into new life in Christ through the waters of baptism.
- We came together as a whole, multi-generational, intercultural church family a few times this year, when our 10.30 service was hosted on separate occasions by our Inspire team, our Diddy Disciples team, and our young people.
- We came together as a church family for termly "All In" prayer meetings and enjoyed a prayer walk around our parish boundary, led by Pete Moorey.
- We came before God in extended prayer with Prayer Rooms during Thy Kingdom Come (before Pentecost) and Advent, finding Him faithfully meeting us in revelation and inspiration.
- In Advent 2025, we held a simple meditation before our Open Door community meal. This has become very

popular and regulars asked that we continue it after Advent ended.

PRAYER: Giving thanks for our musicians and singers, and for the enthusiasm of our congregational singing, we pray that God will continue to grow and release our sung worship in our lives together.

Children (Beth)

THANK YOU

A huge thank you to everyone who gives their time, energy and care to the children and families of Christ Church. We are incredibly grateful for our wonderful volunteer teams who faithfully serve in Diddy Disciples and Kids Church, helping children encounter God, grow in faith, and know they are welcomed, valued and loved. We are also very thankful to Natalie, our Time for God intern, for all her support throughout 2025, and for the encouragement, enthusiasm and care she has brought to the children's ministry.



I have really enjoyed beginning to take on this role, have been so touched by the warm welcome from everyone at Christ Church, and am excited to see where God leads the ministry next.

NEWS

- We repeated the successful 'Good Friday for Families' event, with an immersive retelling of all the events of Holy Week and chance to make an Easter Garden.

- We enjoyed a fantastic Light Night party attended by both our church community and visiting families, celebrating the light and hope God can bring into our lives.
- Our Christingle and Nativity services were very well attended, with many new families joining us.
- We were pleased to continue strengthening links with local schools and toddler groups through seasonal visits and invitations to church events.

PRAYER

We thank God for the children and families connected to Christ Church and pray that they would continue to grow in faith and confidence in God's love. We pray that, in the coming year, children will develop a deeper personal connection with God. We also pray for wisdom as we continue to develop the children's ministry, for more volunteers to join the teams, and for further opportunities to share the love and hope of Jesus with children and families across our parish

Young People (Josh)

THANK YOU again, as always, for everyone's support and prayers towards the youth and running of the youth, and to those who volunteer their time so we can keep the groups running.

I am especially grateful towards my Sunday team, consisting of Pete Moorey, Rebecca Ridgewell and Lovelette Afriyae, who joined the team this year, and a huge thank you to Hellen Chomba for single-handedly being around and allowing us to be able to run Thursday Youth after Natalie departed back home in Germany in July.



NEWS

- The first half of 2025, Youth was running as it had before, deep-diving into different Books in the Bible or following a video series such as "Alpha Youth". We started with both Jenny and Natalie, and then Jenny stepped back to cover other areas. Youth was good, youth was strong.
- In June, after one of the youth turned 18, we got thinking about what was next for the youth? What is there once they turn 18? Do they just get booted out to fend for themselves in the **BIG**, scary Sunday morning service? So came the introduction of the 20s & 30s Homegroup, branching a path for the youth between Sunday Youth and Sunday morning Services.
- In September, we took a step back to look at Thursday youth and did some readjusting to make it more beginner-friendly, making it easier for everyone in their teens to experience God for themselves. Our hope was to make it easier and less intimidating for the young people to invite friends. Through this, we have had a significant increase in the number of young people attending on Thursdays.

- And to wrap up the year, the youth led a special all-age service just run by the youth team, ranging



from leading prayers to bible readings to a drama this year, focusing on Waiting in a time of Advent. We have done youth-led services before, and yet again, the youth were amazing, really making it their own and absolutely smashed it out of the park.

PRAYER

We finished 2025 in a totally different place to how we started the year, but as expected, God

continued to be so present within the youth. I would love to see this continue to grow - and so I encourage us to keep praying, to keep helping and to keep encouraging the youth as they discover, explore and celebrate their faith.

FARSI MINISTRY

THANK YOU to everyone of every background who takes the time to go beyond their language and cultural comfort zones to offer friendship and fellowship to one another in our church community.

Particular thanks to Sepi for her crucial work in this ministry, to Richard Winborn for coming alongside members of the community to pray, teach and encourage, and to Hamid and Antoinette Momtahan, Bettina von Hornhardt and Jonathan and Marion Eden for their particular support, prayers and encouragements for all in the Farsi community.

NEWS

- Working with other Farsi ministry leaders in Church of England churches across the UK, we put together a day conference in Nottingham in June to enable ministry practitioners and charities to spend time with each other face to face. Emma chaired the conference, with Sepi speaking on a panel, and both the Archbishop of York and Bishop of Chelmsford were keynote speakers. This was followed up by a report highlighting the development of Persian Anglican ministry in the UK and hopes for a co-ordinated response to the ministry. Melissa Hutchings played a key supporting role in the delivery of both the conference and the report.
- Over 2025 the asylum process in the UK sped up considerably, meaning that many of our longstanding asylum seeker community gained refugee status and moved away from the area, and those coming to the hotel are here for less time. As a result, our ministry has shifted to those who have a more permanent status in the country and newcomers who have joined are also looking for a longer-term church home.



- Our Wednesday evening Farsi Bible study space has developed as a 'homegroup', where members can eat together and share joys and burdens before opening the Bible and praying together.

PRAYER: Lord, thank you that in heaven the city of God will be filled with 'the glory and honour of the nations' (Rev 21.26). We thank you for our diverse community of faith and we pray that you would bless and uphold the people of Iran, bringing faith, strength, peace and healing so that they may brightly reflect the glory of God.

Pastoral (Jenny D)

THANK YOU for offering welcome, love and care to one another within and beyond the family of the church. We are a community who seek to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice.



An especial thank you to those who lead small groups where we can get to know one another better and walk together as disciples. Particularly thanks to Jonathan and Marion Eden, Juliet Bain, Eli and Asha Howard-Birt and Josh, who have all launched groups in the last year.

NEWS

- This year, we said a sad goodbye and gave thanks for the lives of a number of church and community friends: Dorothy Horsey, Emmanuel Addy, Jennifer Khan-Maylor, Rosa Fergus, Su Peneycad and Hugh Bain. At our simple service for All Souls, we held memories of precious loved ones before God.

- We celebrated the wedding of our dear friends Chibuzor and Nedo with a joyful service and party.
- Three new small groups were born, including one specifically giving our 20s and 30s a particular place of belonging and growth in faith.
- A few different groups enjoyed a tour around the British Museum with Zoltan, finding out about how some exhibits tie in with biblical accounts.
- At harvest time, we held a 'Come Dine With Me', where approximately 60 of us gathered around different tables, as host or guests, getting to know one another as fellow disciples. There were some wonderful stories of new friendships being birthed or nurtured, across all the different cultures and languages within our church family.
- Jenny Thomas retired after serving here for 5 years as Pastoral Minister. We are so grateful not just for all that Jenny did, but even more for who she was, loving well and pointing us to Jesus.
- We advertised but were not successful in recruiting a Discipleship and Pastoral Minister.



PRAYER: We pray for wisdom and help as we seek next steps on the possible recruitment of a Discipleship Lead for Christ Church, especially with a focus on men.



Outreach (Jenny D)

THANK YOU for being a warm and welcoming congregation, and for all the ways in which you have created a hospitable space for people to come and meet with God, whatever their background. Thanks too for those who have contributed to particular outreach opportunities this year, including Sam Meeson and James Quarterman who co-hosted a really encouraging evening Alpha course, and Pete Moorey and the rest of the Christ Church "House Band" who led a brilliant evening of Beer and Carols at the Great Southern at the end of the year.



NEWS

- Alpha in Farsi has been a part of the Christ Church pattern for a number of years now (and continues to be!), and we were really glad to host a small but perfectly formed Alpha course in English in the spring. Relationships with God and others were built up and well-established, and we were so glad to welcome a total of 8 guests across the whole course.
- Encouraged by Richard Winborn to join in with London Mission Week, we decided to hold a Bible and Cake giveaway outside the church in sunny July. We gave away a lot of cake and a few bibles, and a great CCGH team enjoyed being outside, visible and welcoming.
- Beer and Carols filled the Great Southern with the good news of Christmas! Such a fun and encouraging evening, building on a relationship with our local pub and being 'out there' as a community of faith and welcome.

PRAYER:

We pray that we would grow in confidence and creativity as we seek to share good news with our neighbours and follow Christ's commission to make disciples of all nations. We pray for engagement with outreach opportunities including Alpha at Open Door, and Beer and Questions at the Great Southern.

Weekly life and mission in church.

Moving into Wellbeing and Open Door (Pauline)

THANK YOU to all who are involved in our Tuesday welcome into church – especially Diane who runs the popular Moving into Wellbeing gentle exercise class, our Open Door cook Judy who cooks tasty food each week, Iain and church volunteers and staff who make Open Door happen, and our small but wonderful team of bakers who provide delicious cakes.

NEWS

- The exercise class is very successful; people feel the physical benefit and Diane is good at suggesting individual exercises for people. There is also a real sense of community within the group; people look out for each other and some make contact outside the church setting.
- We welcome a wide variety of people to lunch each Tuesday – some regular, others less so; it's good to be able to build relationships with different people, many of whom don't come to church regularly. Recently we have seen increasing numbers.
- During Advent, Jenny started a meditation appropriate for anyone, not just Christians, between the exercise class and lunch; this proved popular and so has continued into 2026.

PRAYER

Please pray that we find ways of sustaining this ministry financially (people are now being invited to contribute to both food and exercise if they are able to), that all would feel equally welcome, and for the Alpha course on Tuesday afternoons which is planned for June and July 2026 – that some Open Door visitors would stay for that and find faith in God.

Playpen (Beth)

THANK YOU to the wonderful team of volunteers who faithfully give their time, care and encouragement to Playpen each week. It continues to be a warm, welcoming and joyful space where parents, carers and young children can play, build friendships and feel supported within our church community. We are especially thankful to Jenny T for all the time, commitment and love she has given to Playpen over the years. We are also very grateful to have Bethany and Becca leading the team with such enthusiasm, kindness and care as they continue to help Playpen grow and flourish.

NEWS

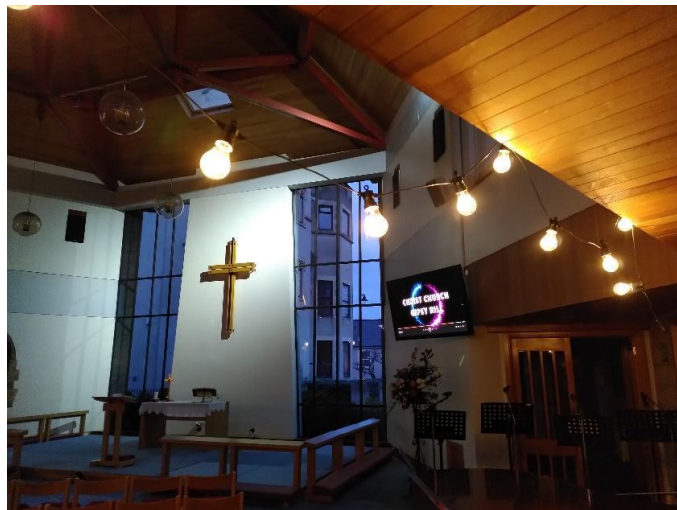
- We said goodbye to Jenny T, and welcomed Bethany and Becca as our new Playpen leaders.
- We enjoyed a range of themed activities and seasonal celebrations throughout the year, helping families engage with church life in fun and accessible ways.
- The theme on our display boards this year has been 'Fairy Tales', with creative activities and decorations enjoyed by both children and adults alike.
- Our Christmas party was a real highlight, with families enjoying crafts, games and a Christian retelling of the Nativity story as we celebrated the birth of Jesus together.

PRAYER: Please pray that everyone who attends Playpen, of all ages, would build strong friendships, feel welcomed and supported, and come to know more of the love of Jesus through the community there.

Other regular events include **Magnolia Club** and **Brownies** (which is served by our very own Chris Woolley).

Buildings (Jenny D)

THANK YOU especially to Stuart Mitchenell who has given much time, skill and care to looking after our buildings, and to James Haddock who has been tending our front garden faithfully on Wednesday afternoons. We're also grateful for the work of Jeanette and Charlotte, in our church office, for their persistence and professionalism in overseeing the various repairs and maintenance work that our buildings need, and for handling our rental agreements.



NEWS

- **Maintenance.** Unfortunately, in November, the boiler which serves the Goodliffe hall and the vestry corridor and rooms developed a fault which a number of contractors couldn't easily fix. This meant we were without heating in the hall for the winter, and as a result we didn't charge rent for our regular users for this period.
- The kitchen roof and ceiling was repaired and the water damage done was made good.
- The carpet was cleaned.
- **Vicarage.** The PCC gave agreement to the Diocesan plan to sell the vicarage in order that a new, more suitable vicarage could be purchased. The vicarage was sold in December 2025.
- **Berridge Road** continues to be leased by Equipping People (New Covenant) Church.
- **Lamberhurst Road**, the flat we were bequeathed, has taken some time to get ready for rental, and we continued to seek God for his intentions for this property. It was finally rented early in 2026.
- **Bookings.** Our list of regular renters and church users have remained stable. Our buildings are extensively used during the week - see details below.

PRAYERS: We pray for God's provision of people, funds and expertise to maintain our buildings. We particularly ask His help for the Quinquennial Inspection taking place in 2026.

Regular weekly bookings or activities in the church and/or hall:

Mondays:

Team Dance, 4pm-8pm.
Brownies, 6pm-8pm

Tuesdays:

Moving into Wellbeing, 11-12
Open Door, 12.45-2.30.
Zumba 7-8pm
Crystal Palace Community
Choir, 7.30-10pm.

Wednesdays:

Pilates, 9.30-11.30am
Playpen: 10-12 noon
Magnolia Club: 2-4pm
Farsi bible study: 5pm-
9.30pm
Team Dance: 4pm-8pm

Thursdays:

Playpen: 10-12 noon

Team Dance: 4pm-8pm

Youth: 7-9pm

Fridays:

9.30-11.30, Pilates

Saturdays:

9am-5pm, Team Dance

Electoral Roll (Pauline)

Following last year's complete revision, the electoral roll was updated in April 2026 and now stands at 153, which is an increase of 3 from last year (8 added and 5 removed). Only 30 (20%) live in the parish, but the parish is small geographically and many live outside the parish boundary but within walking distance of the church. 61 (40%) are male and 92 female; 33 of the 153 are from our Farsi community.

PCC Report (Pauline)

The PCC had 5 regular meetings in 2025, plus a meeting to approve the accounts, and an awayday at Holy Trinity Tulse Hill in July. As well as standing items such as finance and safeguarding, we discussed the clearing and preparation for renting out of the maisonette in Lamberhurst Road that we had been left and the re-energising of our mission support including setting up a new mission committee. We also discussed staffing needs; we were delighted to welcome back Charlotte Carpenter as Operations Manager and Beth Peters as Children's Minister, though failed to appoint someone to lead on Discipleship, with a focus on men. We looked at plans and hopes for the year, and reviewed some of the events. We spent some time considering racial justice and inclusion, and also ways of helping those in the Farsi community, particularly those who are now settled here, to become more integrated into the life of the church.

At the awayday, we were able to spend more time together and among other things looked at prayer and outreach, worship and unity, and discipleship and all ages.

Safeguarding (Pauline)

We are always mindful of the importance of safeguarding, and want to keep Christ Church as a safe place for everyone, children and adults. The PCC has adopted the diocese safeguarding policies introduced in 2019; we follow the house of bishops guidance, and deal appropriately with any incidents which arise, which they do from time to time; the diocese safeguarding team are really helpful and always available.

The diocese has changed DBS providers following a data breach at the previous company used. We kept everyone who may have been affected informed, and as far as I'm aware no-one's data has been compromised. The systems of the current providers, thirtyone-eight, seem more robust – it certainly takes longer to do anything! We are keeping up to date with DBS checks for those who need them.

We celebrated Safeguarding Sunday in the autumn, a good reminder to the whole congregation of the importance of safeguarding and some of the things we have in place; Beth also introduced some of the thirtyone-eight material to the children.

In April 2026 we held a safeguarding training session for the module that most people need, led by a member of the diocese team; 23 people completed it satisfactorily and most other people are up to date with training. Both the prepared material and people's contributions to discussion were really helpful.

The current parish safeguarding officers are Pauline Simpson and Beth Peters – do please speak to one of us, Jenny or Emma, if you have any safeguarding concerns.

Deanery Synod (Bev)

Over the past year, the Deanery Synod has continued to support the Church of England's vision to *"proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ afresh in each generation"* and to become a Church that is *simpler*,

humbler and bolder. Through prayer, learning and open conversation, members have gathered to reflect on how the Church can remain a place of welcome, safety, compassion and hope within a rapidly changing society.

Key Areas of Focus

Safeguarding and Safer Churches – July 2025: *“Let the little children come to me... for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”* Matthew 19:14

Racial Justice and Intercultural Development – September 2025: *“There is neither Jew nor Gentile... for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”* Galatians 3:28

As the country continues to move through rapid social and cultural change, the Deanery Synod has sought to support churches in becoming places where the love of Christ is seen, heard and experienced.

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:35

Finance (Janet)

Treasurer’s Report 2025 accounts

Headlines

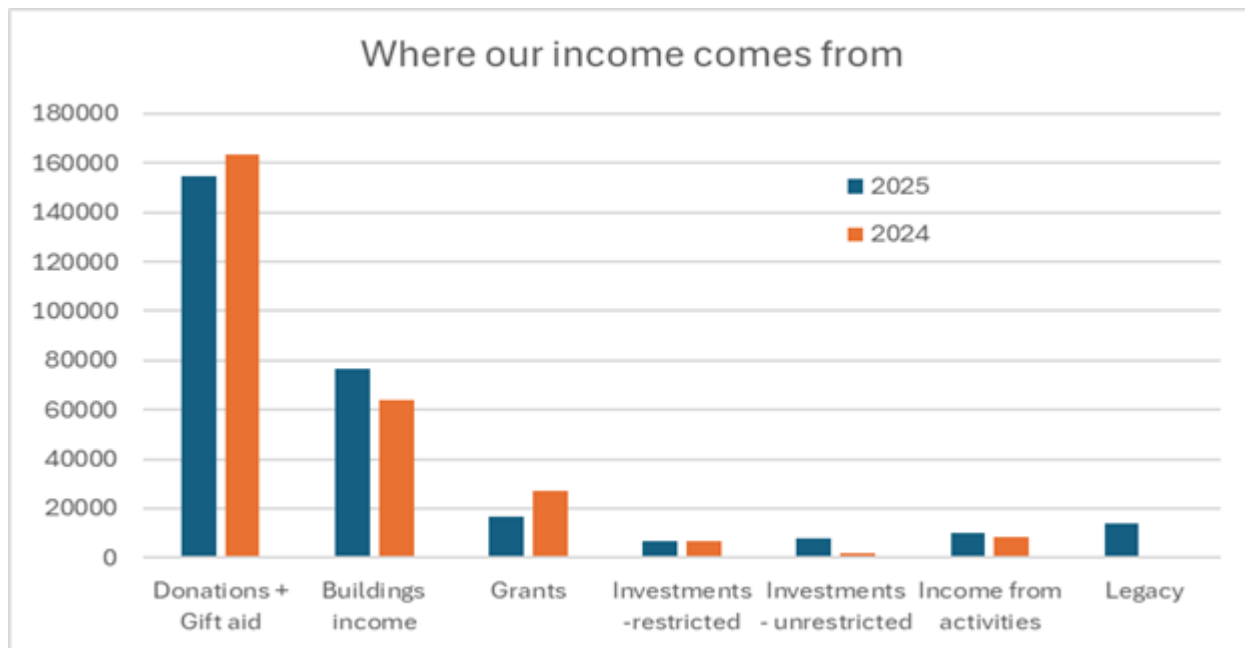
We are so thankful that God is good and continues to provide for our needs at Christ Church and that the congregation continues to respond to God’s faithfulness by giving to the church and sharing in the ministry here. Here are some of the highlights:

- This year the accounts reflect the amazing legacy that we were told about in 2024. We received the keys to a flat in West Norwood in January 2025 and then later in the year a cash sum of **£13,700**. The accounts show the flat as an **investment valued at £350,000** and the income and costs related to the flat appear in the Statement of Financial Activities. After much work, we are pleased to report that tenants moved into the flat in February 2026.
- Overall, the accounts show a net surplus, including the legacy, of **£335,387** (2024: £24,000). However, if the value of the property is excluded, the accounts show a **deficit of £14,600**.
- Excluding the legacy, **unrestricted income** for the year was **£253,000**. 61% of this income comes from the congregation and another 30% from the letting of our buildings. This is an increase of £12,700 over 2024 - mainly due to an increase in lettings income. Total income was similar to 2024.
- We have one restricted investment that saw a loss in value of just over £10,000 during the year to £241,000. Income from this investment can only be used to fund work with children and young people. The income from this investment was **£6,976** in the year (2024: £6,800)
- At the year end, the church holds **£96,900 in free reserves**, plus a property reserve of **£350,000** and **£90,000** in building and contingency reserves. All restricted reserves were used in the year.

Income detail

Excluding the legacy (£363,700 in total), donations (mainly from the congregation) make up 61% of our total income and were around **£154,500** in 2025 (2024: £163,400). Our buildings generate a further 30%, amounting to **£76,700**, an increase on the 2024 figure of £63,700.

The total income for 2025 (excluding the value of the property) was **£286,600** (2024: £271,000), the balance of income being made up of grants and income generated by the activities that we run - **£26,700** (2024: £34,200), dividends and interest from our investments - **£15,000** (2024: £8,400) and the cash from the legacy of **£13,700**.



Expenses detail

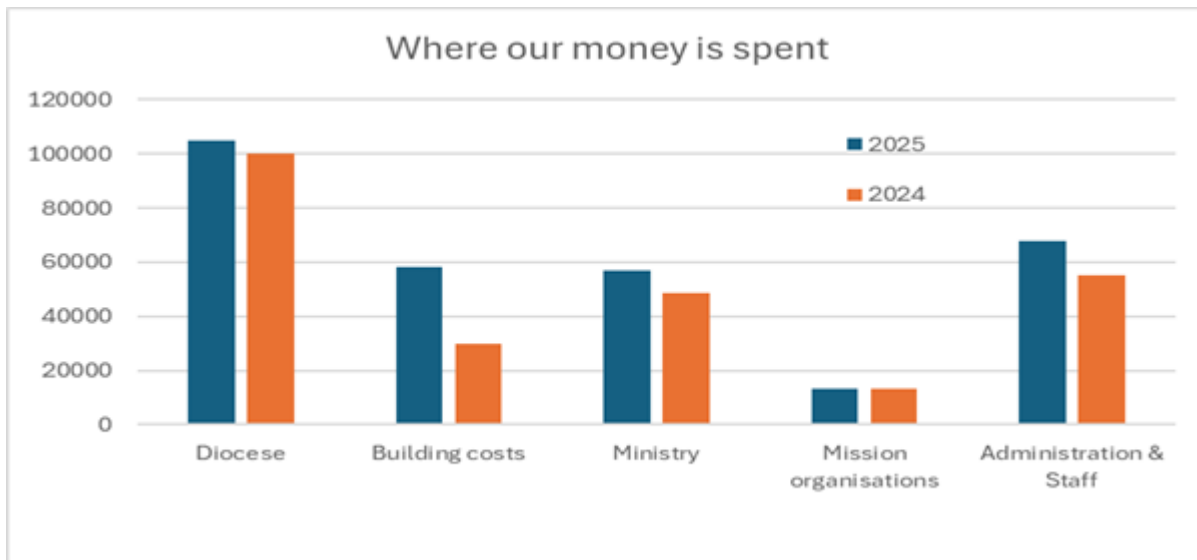
Total expenses were **£301,000** for the year (2024: £247,000). Our largest expense remains our payment to the Diocese of **£105,000**, an increase of £5,000 over 2024. This money is used to pay the salary, housing and pension costs of our incumbent - the total cost of one vicar (including a portion of central costs) being around £90,000. This made us a net giver to the Diocese of around £15,000. The surplus is used by the Diocese to support smaller parishes that cannot meet the full cost of an incumbent.

Our giving to UK and overseas mission organisations remained at **£13,500**. This is an area that has changed in 2025, do check out the information around the church on the organisations we support.

Much of the increase in expenses related to our buildings - some on the flat, getting it ready for rental - but also much on increased running costs for our main building, including repair work. Overall, building costs were **£58,300**, almost double the £30,000 in 2024.

Our work with youth and children continues to benefit from the Goodliffe Endowment, the income from which contributes to the cost of our youth minister and our work with young people. Our work with young people cost **£24,000** in the year (2024: £20,500). The Goodliffe Endowment generated an income of £6,976 (2024: £6,813) towards this.

Our work in the community cost **£16,900** (2024: £13,000)



Reserves

The PCC holds designated reserves of £440,000, including £350,000 representing the value of the flat. Excluding these designated reserves, there is £96,600 in free funds (2024: £89,700). All restricted funds have now been spent.

Thank you!

Many thanks to all those who have given their time, money and skills over the past year, all of which has contributed to our healthy financial position. If you would like to share in the cost of the ministry here at Christ Church, please speak to the treasurer, Janet, or to our vicar Jenny. They will be able to talk to you about different ways to give.

Please pray for the PCC and for Jenny as they work and pray together to discern the best use of our resources to further God's kingdom in Gipsy Hill.

Janet Boyce – Treasurer

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