

APCM Children's and Families Report 2026

Over the past year, working with children, young people, and families across our villages has continued to be rewarding. Attendance can be unpredictable, and it is not always clear who or how many will come along to events and activities. Even so, it remains a real privilege to be part of this ministry and to see God at working in our village.

The work continues to develop as we seek to connect with both those who already have a faith and those who are beginning to explore it. Across both churches, it has been encouraging to see families taking part in what we offer. These shared experiences are helping to build relationships, create space for conversations about faith, and support people as they take steps towards following Jesus.

In May 2026 my 3-year Children and Family Minister license from the Diocese ran out, but I am delighted that I have been granted a new license – so you're stuck with me for a bit longer!

What follows is an overview of some of the key areas and highlights from the past year.

Sundays

Our Families at 3.30pm gathering has continued most months over the last year. While numbers remain small, those who attend engage well and clearly value the space. It has also proved particularly helpful for families with children who have additional needs, offering an environment where they feel comfortable and included.

Most families also come along to Fun and Faith at SGBC, which continues to meet on the fourth Sunday of each month.

Seasonal services such as Harvest, Christingle, and Easter have provided important opportunities for families to join with the wider church community. Having some of these services in the afternoon gave the opportunity to open Trinity Café in the morning for us to connect with more people, and to raise money for the One Can Trust and the Children's Society. It was encouraging to see more families at both Harvest and Christingle. We continue to look for ways to strengthen our provision in a way that works for busy family life.

Using the café space for Soul Space has given the opportunity for families who may be unfamiliar with traditional church to explore faith more in this relaxed environment, with space for the children to play.

It has been wonderful to have several baptisms this year and to support these families in their faith journeys with their little ones.

Trinity Café

Over the last year some of my time has gone to helping to establish Trinity café.

One of my favourite hours of the week is a Thursday from 4.30-5.30pm when a group of young people gather in Trinity Café for Teen Takeover. What started off as an idea to provide a safe space for the youth people to catch up with friends and do their homework has grown into a place of connection and community, which is really valued by the group that come each week. We have a number of regulars we see every week and those who pop in when their timetable allows. A number of these young people come along to Connect +.

Connect+

Connect+ continues as a monthly group for young people in Years 7–9, based at SGBC. In September we welcome a number of new people to the group.

The young people contribute thoughtful ideas and ask meaningful questions, and it is exciting to see how the group is beginning to take shape and grow.

I am grateful to Lydia (1st half of the year) and Abraham for their involvement with running this group.

Toddlers in the Woods (written by Ali)

TODDLERS IN THE WOODS turns 5 in July! It thrives with a wonderful team, led by myself, Ali, with Bridget Day - responsible for all the singing/ music including the marching band, Nora Bennett and Rachel Gibson of Holy Trinity.

Without them it would be a shadow of the vibrant group it is today. It is a privilege to head up this Team.

The core group of families turning out early on a Friday morning, regardless of the weather conditions, grows year by year. As we always have, we welcome all families from Jordans and Seer Green or those having close connections with our villages, each week whether joining us on a regular basis or just from time to time.

In 2025 we introduced an event - FAMILIES IN THE WOODS - and this we held again on the 25th April 2026. This is very well supported by our present families and those who have now outgrown us. We will repeat in 2027.

Our commitment to our faith is apparent every week and we will continue to encourage all to join in the services and activities in Holy Trinity our host church.

How grateful the TODDLERS IN THE WOODS Team are for the ongoing support from all concerned with Holy Trinity.

Schools Work

Open the Book continues to take place each Tuesday morning at Seer Green CE School, where Bible stories are performed by the team with often some enthusiastic Year 6 children. It is a privilege to be welcomed into the school, and to share the Bible with them. I am very grateful to the team who give their time so faithfully. Additional volunteers would be very welcome.

Rev Jez also regularly leads collective worship at the school on Thursdays.

In November children had their Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) which noted in the report “Local ministers visit regularly and make memorable use of ‘Open the Book’ style worship. As a result, pupils are flourishing spiritually with some of them sharing their experiences with their families at home.”

We have welcomed the children to Church at Harvest, Christmas and Easter for services, running two back-to-back at 9.10am and 9.40am as we can't fit the whole school into church at once. It is great to give them the opportunity to be ‘on our turf’ and experience hearing about faith in our church building.

In July, Bibles were presented to Year 6 pupils as a gift from Holy Trinity, with the hope that they will continue to explore and engage with these stories. All the Y6 leavers were also given a voucher for Trinity Café.

Throughout the year, I have continued to visit Jordans Infant School every few weeks, leading assemblies and joining in with key celebrations.

Special Events

Holiday periods throughout the year—Summer, October, and Easter—have once again provided opportunities to host activities for families from both villages. These included Messy Crafternoons for children aged 2–10 and Family Fun sessions for younger children with their parents or carers. These events continue to play an important role in developing relationships and maintaining contact with families, particularly during the long summer break.

The Advent and Christmas season was filled with a variety of well-supported events. Christingle brought together families and the wider congregation in a shared service.

For the third consecutive year, “Sing into Christmas” took place, with Rev Jez and I working alongside Jane Smith and the Seer Green Singers to create a joyful mix of carols, readings, and seasonal music.

Cookies and Carols once again attracted families after school, offering a relaxed opportunity to enjoy refreshments and sing Christmas songs together.

The Crib Services were also very well attended, with tickets fully booked. It is always great fun to retell this familiar Christmas story with lots of interaction and the joyful chaos of creating a nativity scene with as many as want to take part!

Having Trinity Café open has provided a new space to run activities for children and families and during February half term and Easter we hosted games, toys and crafts for children to enjoy along alongside café refreshments.

On Good Friday, alongside the adult joint service, I led a family’s workshop on the Easter story. I was delighted by the take up of this, with some families coming to church for the first time, and we had a lovely morning together.

The Great Seer Green Easter Egg Hunt was more popular than ever this year, with over 400 people taking part. Families explored the village solving clues and collecting treats, with new challenge for 2026. Thanks go to three local teenagers for their help in running the event. It remains a highlight of the year and a valuable opportunity to connect with the wider community and share the Easter message.

General

In addition to my specific children and families work, I have been actively involved in the wider life of the church through general service planning, contributing to services, and pastoral care supporting families in need. A lot of time goes into communicating what we offer to the village through a number of different channels, including social media, WhatsApp, community news magazine, posters and our website. Rev Jez, Janine, Janelle and I meet regularly to look at the provision we offer to our community through our church services and general church admin. As part of the Trinity Cafe Management team (Tom, Rev Jez, and our Barista) we also meet regularly for both operational and strategic conversations. I am also part of the PCC looking supporting the church’s long-term vision, mission and ministry. I love being part of this church and look forward to seeing what comes next in the ears to come!

Ministry at SGBC

My involvement with SGBC includes a range of groups and activities: Baby Group, Little Blessings Tinies and Toddler Group, Torchlight, Connect, Who Let the Dads Out, and Fun and Faith. In September we started to run Lite bites, a lunch and chat group for young mums. This has started well and we hope to shape it further over the coming year. Each of these provides valuable opportunities to spend time with children, young people, and their families, and to build relationships over time.

Thanks

I would like to thank everyone who supports this area of ministry. The work we do with children, young people, and families depends on your time, commitment, prayer, and financial support, all of which are greatly appreciated.

If you would like to find out more about any aspect of this work, please do come and have a chat with me – maybe over cake in the café!

Janna Holder
Children and Families Minister