

APCM Vicar's Report 2026

It's hard to believe that this time last year, Trinity Café had not yet properly begun. It has been such a huge part of the mission and ministry of the church that it feels, at least to me, that it must have been around for years. A very generous gift of £9,638 from the Claire Foundation enabled us to put everything in place to open in June, with our wonderful barista Grace Gilbertson hosting the space from the start. This came after (and indeed before) a huge amount of excellent work by Tom Allen, who has built and adapted all the furnishings, drawn together the business plan, supported Grace in a variety of ways, and overseen significant upgrades to the building's electrics and plumbing. Janna Holder has also had a vital part to play in turning this vision into a reality, especially in the areas of community and mission, but also including areas such as fixtures/fittings, licencing and compliance, identity and market positioning, and much else. Ivan Chakroborty, director of Nuach coffee, also provided the expertise, training and indeed equipment to ensure the quality of the coffee, and it was wonderful to be able to enlist Yolanda Lidgely as our cake-baker extraordinaire. We were also delighted by how members of the church, and others across the village, signed up to volunteer. The café has quickly become popular across the village, and is providing a wonderful community gathering place, playing host to initiatives including Slow Stitching, Teen Takeover (see below), and other village groups such as the Folk Club. The impact on the atmosphere of the village earned us a special mention in the village's winning of the Best Kept Buckinghamshire Village award! The café is also making a positive contribution to church finances, and we think (though it is hard to measure) that we are also seeing movement from the café into the wider life of the church. It is this final part that we especially long to see grow – that as a result of all this wonderful hard work, people would find Jesus and join the community of his people in our villages.

In our regular 10am morning services, alongside spending some time following the lectionary, we have also had a sermon series in James, and more recently we have been working our way through the Psalms. In the Autumn, we also started 'Soul Space', a monthly event on a Sunday morning, in place of the 10am service, in which we simply open the café, then have a 'thought for the day' at 10am followed by intentional conversation. The purpose of Soul Space has been to create a stepping stone for those interested in church but intimidated by the thought of a regular service – a chance to surprise them with the relevance and wisdom of Christianity, and to draw them into the community and a fuller exploration of faith. It has been great to see green shoots appear as people from outside the regular congregation have started coming, and we are excited to see how it grows. Families @3.30 has also continued to provide a child-friendly church gathering, roughly monthly on a Sunday afternoon, and the 8am BCP service continues to meet twice a month.

Over Easter we ran our Maundy Thursday meal (huge thanks to the Three Horseshoes for their catering help!), as well as our regular pattern of Good Friday and Easter Sunday services. Over Christmas, similarly, we felt little need to change what we did the previous year, and reran a similar set of services and events: Christingle, 'Sing Into Christmas' (in the Jubilee Hall), Family Carols, Traditional Carols, Crib services, Midnight Communion, and of course our Christmas Day celebration. Peppered in between all these were other moments of the regular church calendar, such as Harvest, All Souls and Remembrance. We had nine baptisms, with a number of others coming up in the next few months.

Our relationship with the Baptist church remains deep and rich, and it is wonderful to have such a strong sense of partnership and shared mission with them. We held a number of joint events with them, and look forward to doing more.

'Teen Spirit' (our youth group for older teens) has continued to meet, with our regular contingent of boys all starting their A-level year. In addition, we have launched 'Teen Takeover', a weekly event in which teens (mostly at the younger end) can gather in Trinity Café, to chat, do homework, or just laugh over a game or two. In November, we also hosted a concert for some of the teen bands connected to the village, which saw the church building heaving with teenagers and their parents.

At the younger end of things, Janna continues to lead an amazing array of ministry to younger kids and their parents, all shared with the Baptist Church, while Ali Cork faithfully continues to lead Toddlers In The Woods every Friday. Janna and I remain very involved in the spiritual life of Seer Green CofE Primary School, taking assemblies and welcoming the school for services at the church.

Janine Dunnell continues to provide wonderful leadership to two bible study groups, which meet on Thursday afternoon and Wednesday evening (the latter being shared with SGBC). These provide a deeply rewarding way of growing in maturity and confidence in faith.

The Men's Breakfast (led by Anthony Bargioni) continues monthly, and has multiplied in format in the creation of 'Men On Mondays', a weekly morning chat time in Trinity Café. Whisky Wednesdays (led by me) remains a regular fixture in the vicarage garden. With all of these ministries among men in the village, our longing is ultimately that people will see something of Jesus expressed in loving community, and be drawn (or drawn deeper) into relationship with him.

The Pastoral Care team has continued to meet regularly to review our support of the vulnerable and isolated in the church community. Much of the team's ministry goes unseen, but I want to recognise Heather Rowe, Rev. Jenny Tebboth, Richard Campbell, Sue Puttergill and Nigel Morgan, for the amazing work they do in caring as Christ would have us care. We were very sad to say goodbye to Jenny in the summer, as she moved her ministry focus to Denham.

I remain deeply grateful to our 'senior leadership team' consisting of Janine, Tom, and Anthony, who add vital wisdom to the direction the church takes at every turn, as well as to all the members of the PCC for all they do to guide us in planning and actioning all that goes on. Thanks in particular for Anne Wall for her continued work on maintaining our safeguarding, and for Audrey Hardy for continuing to look after our church finances, along with Sam Barclay, Janice Barrett, Sue Puttergill and Linda West, and of course Janine, Tom, Anthony and Janna.

Prior to every other PCC meeting, we continue to hold a church prayer meeting, with the double focus of the direct mission and ministry of the church, and the needs of the wider community with which we are involved. It continues to be essential that we support all that we do in prayer – both to discern God's heart and plan, and to invite God to bless the work of our hands in service of Christ's Kingdom.

A special thank you to Janelle Stephenson, our administrator, who does so much that is unseen by most of us. And finally, my biggest thanks to two people without whom the wheels would swiftly come off the Holy Trinity bus: our warden, Janine Dunnell – I am eternally for all the time and energy, and indeed wisdom and insight, that Janine gives to me, the leadership team, and the whole church; and Janna Holder, who does a huge amount to shape and support the café, services, and all the wider mission activities of the church, especially around young families.

With so many seeds of growth, we look forward watching gospel ministry grow across these villages in the coming year.