

Annual Report 2025



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Letter from the Vicar



As we reflect on 2025, I do so with deep gratitude for God's faithfulness to us as a church family. The year has been marked by steady growth, significant transition, deepened prayer, missional engagement, and careful navigation of complex times within both Church and society. While much of our life together is found in the faithful, week-by-week rhythms of worship, discipleship and pastoral care, there have also been key milestones and developments that shape our story this year.

Prayer and Spiritual Depth

If one theme has stood out above others, it has been a growing commitment to prayer and to "giving God space." Our monthly prayer gatherings have continued to be a highlight of each month, with attendance increasing and a tangible sense of God's presence deepening as the year has progressed. We have intentionally developed a stronger integration of worship and prayer within these evenings, and many have testified to powerful encounters with God.

In May, our focused prayer events were particularly encouraging, and during the summer we undertook 100 hours of prayer in the Sanctuary. Although momentum took time to build, it became a beautiful and significant period in which many committed intentional time with the Lord. It reinforced our desire to see the Sanctuary increasingly used as a place of encounter and intercession.

Prayer has also been strengthening within our small groups. Following a survey and conversations with leaders in September, it was encouraging to hear of the spiritual vitality, discipleship and friendship taking place across our groups. These remain a central context for pastoral care, growth and belonging within St Chads.

Our preaching series this year have contributed significantly to our depth of discipleship. The series on 1 Corinthians challenged and shaped us early in the year; Proverbs laid wise foundations during the summer; and the autumn series in Daniel felt particularly timely, helping us think biblically about faithful living in complex and polarised times.

Evangelism, Alpha and Signs of Spiritual Openness

We began the year with Alpha, which proved deeply encouraging. While numbers reduced after the first session - particularly among younger attendees - the group that continued represented a rich mix of ages and backgrounds. The Holy Spirit day was especially significant, with several making commitments and choosing to be baptised. As always, Alpha reminds us that fruitfulness is not measured only in numbers but in transformed lives.

Throughout the year we have sensed signs - both locally and more widely - of renewed spiritual openness. While the wider Church of England continues to experience institutional strain and the national safeguarding crisis has created anxiety and uncertainty, we are also hearing increasing accounts of intellectual openness to faith and of individuals encountering God in personal and unexpected ways. We continue to pray that we would steward this season faithfully, keeping our focus on Jesus rather than allowing negative headlines to shape our outlook.

Our outreach into the community has remained strong. Events such as the Neon Disco, Halloween outreach, presence at the Romiley Christmas Market, Café Carols and seasonal LifeCentre activities have built bridges and created space for Jesus-centred conversations. The annual Memorial Service, though smaller in number than some previous years, was deeply meaningful for those who attended.

We added an extra service of baptisms and confirmations in late November, as evidence of ongoing spiritual growth within our church family.

Children, Youth and Families

2025 has been a year of both transition and strengthening in our children's and youth ministries. You can read more detail in later reports so I will share just some headlines.

We appointed Hannah as Young Families Lead earlier in the year, and later appointed Anna as Youth Ministry Co-ordinator following excellent interview processes for both. Both have settled well into the staff team, and it has been encouraging to see renewed clarity and momentum emerging. Dave's priesting in June was another significant moment, and his growing ministry continues to be a gift to us.

Sunday Kids ministry has seen increasing numbers (averaging around 25–30 children weekly in Kids church and a growing number in Minis), alongside God raising up new leaders of real calibre. There is a noticeable hunger among the children to worship, and leaders have embraced this with enthusiasm. Mini Church has experimented creatively, and is bursting with life and numbers.

Youth ministry continues to grow in depth. We said “goodbye” to Zeke in the summer, and we are grateful for how his ministry grew amongst us, and the love the young people had for him. Anna and Dave and their growing team have brought a new season, with a depth of discipleship and it is a joy to see the friendships amongst our young people develop across a wide age range.

Hannah’s leadership has brought a fresh direction to Mini Chadders and it continues to thrive under her leadership. We continue to point those who attend to know Jesus, and generate so many relationships and connections through this ministry. We are also building connections into healthcare networks and EarlyLife. Just4Dads has transitioned to a monthly rhythm, which has made it more manageable and sustainable.

Midweek ministries have adapted wisely. BLAST has shifted towards an event-based model, reflecting current volunteer and attendance capacity, while school engagement has increased. Visits from local primary school classes, gospel-centred sessions, and developing reading support teams represent important missional investment.

LifeCentre and Community Engagement

The LifeCentre continues to be a vital missional hub. The prophetic and scriptural wall art has stimulated a noticeable increase in faith conversations, rooted in our priority of prayer and intentional hospitality. Volunteer culture remains strong, evidenced in the well-attended thank-you evening and the generous spirit among the team. Christmas activities were fully booked, and creative events provide relational pathways for deeper engagement.

Cherry Tree projects - Warm Space, Food Provision, Uniform for All and the Hub - remain crucial expressions of our service to the community. Rachel, Jill and their volunteer teams continue to navigate both logistical challenges and pastoral complexities with wisdom. Warm Space, in particular, has become not only practical provision but also a place of testimony, prayer and worship. Harvest generosity and additional donations have strengthened food provision, and partnership working remains a key value.

Oasis continues to provide a warm and welcoming space, with good team support structures and ongoing operational strengthening. The pastoral visiting team maintains regular contact with around 15 individuals, including care home ministry and home communion, ensuring that those unable to attend church remain connected. We want to express special thanks to Ian Dixon, who is stepping down from many years of faithfully serving many with home communion.

Church Life, Leadership and Team

One of the great encouragements this year has been the unity and health of the staff team. With Katie as Associate Vicar, Dave established in St Chads, and the addition of Hannah and Anna, we are developing sustainable rhythms of collaboration and shared leadership.

Our Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) has met regularly for prayer, biblical reflection and strategic discussion. In 2025 we considered: ‘Are we ready for the Quiet Revival?’, giving God space in church life, and the Blended consultation. We chose not only to discuss but to worship, pray and listen together.

Following wide input, we have reshaped Blended services. Renamed ‘All Age’ (for now), they will move to a half-termly rhythm with a broader team, including children and youth, from January. This reflects our conviction that all-age worship remains central to God’s vision for us.

September’s Reset Sunday in the refurbished Guywood was a joyful time of worship and fellowship. Integrating communion and lunch expressed our desire to connect encountering God with community life.

We have also navigated challenges, including clarifying the purpose of church WhatsApp groups amid wider political polarisation. These realities call us to model biblical faithfulness, gracious disagreement and relational unity.

Wider Partnerships and Formation

Mission partnerships remain important. We welcomed Sam Miller from Open Doors to preach, and the Missions Committee sustains these links. Due to higher income in 2024, the PCC gave a one-off gift to St Barnabas Hattersley, received as a direct answer to prayer.

Eighty-four members attended New Wine Festival, which was impactful across generations, especially for younger families.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and discover more about the life of St Chads.

Richard Pennystan



Wardens' report

It is always a blessing when writing this report to reflect on God's faithfulness. We are so blessed at St Chads to receive great teaching from Richard, Katie and Dave, and to have so many other gifted people who give of their time and gifts to serve God in our community. We want to express our thanks to Jane, Alys and Ian for all the work they do to help the church run legally, smoothly and warm.

As we said last year, part of the Wardens' traditional role is looking after our buildings. This year's larger projects were mainly focussed on the Guywood, installing an amazing new kitchen and dealing with damp and woodworm issues. Huge thanks to the team who organised this, enabling the many groups who meet there to continue to enjoy the fantastic space.

Hannah Bettany joined us as our Young Families lead, and looks after Mini Chadders (formerly Prammies), Baby Buddies and Just 4 dads. She has brought fresh ideas to the groups and relationships continue to be built and strengthened.

Prayer is central to all we do at St Chads; the monthly prayer times are so encouraging. The Sanctuary continues to provide a special place for personal or corporate prayer; a place where members of the public can experience God's presence. During the week there is a morning prayer time, Monday to Thursday 9-9.20, which is a great way to start the day, plus two Zoom prayer meetings - Monday and Thursday at 7am.

The Eco team have continued to look at how we can be good stewards of our environment. We have had new LED lights installed in the Guywood and a new bike rack at the front of church. We held our Great Big Green Day on a lovely sunny day in July. Lots of people from the community came along and we linked with Greave Primary School for a competition which was judged on the day at Guywood.

There has been further outreach into the Village. On Halloween a team blessed people with hot chocolate and the message that Jesus loves them. At Christmas we joined in the Christmas market, with nativity-themed photo opportunities and invitations to the Christmas services and information about Alpha.



Zeke left at the end of July and Anna Macaulay was appointed to take on the role of Youth Ministry Co-ordinator. We are so encouraged to see our young people in church and sharing in the life of the church.

Our two Sunday Services (9.15am Parish Communion and 11am Informal Worship) and our mid-week communion (Wednesday 11am) have continued to flourish, providing our parish with diverse ways to worship and meet together. The 11am service is still live-streamed on YouTube. We had the privilege of two baptism services this year, so powerful to hear and see what God is doing in people's lives.

We are so grateful to everyone who volunteers and serves at St Chads; from welcoming people on a Sunday, serving in the Kids and Youth ministry, sound, projection, leading worship, serving coffee - the list goes on. During the week many serve at Oasis, LifeCentre, Cherry Tree, Early Life, Food Provision, and leading youth and small groups, not forgetting cleaning.

Please read the separate reports to see details of all these ministries. It is sometimes a challenge to fill all of our volunteer spaces and if you feel you can help serve on any of our teams please contact the church office.

Our APCM was held during a joint Sunday morning service in April. The PCC met bi-monthly and held an away morning to pray and think through God's vision for St Chads. The MLT (Ministry Leadership Team) for those who lead ministries attached to St Chads meets four times a year to receive teaching, to share vision and hear from each other about what God is doing. The MLT also joined the PCC away mornings.

In the summer New Wine United returned to Shepton Mallet, it was an opportunity for many of the Church family to spend quality time together, enjoy worshipping with thousands and receive great teaching. Many of our church family served on team. If you're interested in going this year, then speak to anyone who went last year about how amazing it was.

Reports on finances, facilities and other changes are covered elsewhere but we close by thanking God for everyone at St Chads who has furthered God's Kingdom here in Romiley.

Jan Ford & Andrew Goddard



PCC report

Whilst much of the work of the PCC necessarily involves spreadsheets, policies and procedures, there has also been a great deal of joy in our PCC meetings over the past year. Officially, St Chads PCC is a registered charity with responsibility for cooperating with the Incumbent in promoting, within the parish, the whole mission of the Church — pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical (PCC (Powers) Measure 1956). In practice, however, it is much more than this. The PCC is a group of friends, united by a shared love for Jesus and his Church, seeking in prayer, love and unity to keep our focus on our three strategic anchors: glorifying God, loving community, and following Jesus.

The PCC has responsibility for the overall oversight of St Chads, including budgeting and finances; the management of buildings and facilities; health and safety; safeguarding; employment and recruitment; volunteer support; policy matters; and ecumenical and diocesan engagement. PCC members and Deanery Synod Representatives are elected for three-year terms. Officers of the PCC (such as the Treasurer) and members of the Standing Committee are elected annually following the Annual Meeting. The Standing Committee meets regularly and is authorised to make decisions and transact business between PCC meetings where necessary.

St Chads PCC has adopted the Church of England's safeguarding policy, Promoting a Safer Church, and has complied with its duties under Section Five of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016. All staff and volunteers whose roles involve working with children or vulnerable adults are recruited in accordance with the House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance, and safeguarding training is undertaken in line with Church of England requirements.

Main items of governance and discussion in 2025:

- Recruitment of a Young Families Worker and a Youth Ministry Coordinator.
- Governance and stewardship of St Chads financial resources, including the review and oversight of governance policies and procedures.

- Ongoing oversight of the fabric of our buildings. During 2025, particular focus was given to the Guywood building. Works undertaken included the repair of the wooden floor affected by woodworm; repair and replastering of walls following water damage; replacement of lighting with LED equivalents; and a major refurbishment of the Guywood kitchen.
- Review of the church sound system.
- Governance and stewardship of Chads financial resources.
- A faculty agreement and repair to the two quatrefoils on the south-facing roof of church, removal of the large leylandii in the garden on 21 Guywood Lane and lowering the hedge at the rear of the Guywood.

PCC 2025

Pauls Adshead	
Helen Bray*	Treasurer/Deanery Synod
Robert Bucknall	
George Burghel	Joined 2024
Andrew Cursham	Stepped down
Jan Ford*	Warden
Kirstie Goddard	
Andrew Goddard*	Warden
Pam Greenland	
Marilyn Gregory	Stepped down
Carl Grimsditch	Stepped down
Jane Higginbottom*	Secretary
Dave Hill	Clergy
Kate Kuyt	
Ros Lloyd	Deanery Synod
John Macaulay	
Ruth Otto	Deanery Synod
Richard Pennystan*	Chair
Jeanette Simpson	
Katie Wade	Clergy
Mark Warburton	
Rob Williams	

*Standing Committee Member

Andrew, Marilyn and Carl have stepped down from PCC this year. Thank you for their service to the PCC and to St Chads.

Sidespersons

Church Representation Rules mean Sidespersons are elected by the PCC following the APCM.

Thank you to Malcolm Booker, Frank Moseley, Craig Fairfield and Geoff Walton for their willingness to serve for another year.

Fabric & Facilities

A huge thank you to Ian Otto and for all that he does, seen and unseen, ensuring that our buildings are in good working order.

Ongoing upkeep of our buildings including: PAT testing, fire safety, lightening conductor inspections, piano and organ tuning, gas safety checks, air-conditioning and insurance.

We are working on a programme of building maintenance for Church and The Guywood including in 2025, the church roof and the kitchen floor at the Guywood.

We are still awaiting the report on our five year church building inspection, the Quinquennial, that took place in 2020/21. A new inspection was undertaken in November and we are awaiting the findings.

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod is the group of our 10 local Anglican churches that provides an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. Four members of the PCC currently sit on Deanery Synod. The Deanery Synod met three times this year and some of the discussions included the following subjects:

- Growing and sustaining the Church
- Becoming an inviting and welcoming Church

Electoral Roll

The roll was fully revised in 2025 as part of the six-year Church of England cycle and governance. We currently have 207 people on the Electoral Roll of St Chads.

The PCC employs five part time members of staff:

Alys Bassett	Operations Assistant
Hannah Bettany	Young Families Lead
Ernie Cooper	Verger (unpaid)
Jane Higginbottom	Head of Operations
Anna Macaulay	Youth Ministry Coordinator
Ian Otto	Facilities Manager

There are also many, many volunteers across all areas of church life. Thank you to EVERYONE who serves.



Finance Report

We continue to thank God for his ongoing provision to us through the generosity of our church family by way of regular giving, donations and legacies. A summary can be found on the Finance page of this report. Full accounts are available in church or by request to Jane in the church office.

The PCC sets the annual budget in faith and monitor both the budget comparison and cashflow regularly.

We thank Jane Higginbottom, who manages the daily financial affairs of our church and John Simpson, our Independent Examiner.

Helen Bray

Finance

Missional Giving

Each year the PCC sets a Mission budget based on 10% of the full income of the previous account year. This is given to missionary organisations, activities and individuals at home and overseas. The Missions Committee oversees how we distribute these funds, together with PCC.

Most of the Mission Budget is given as regular support to organisations and individuals where there is a link with St Chads. As a rule, we review this regular giving on a two-yearly basis, unless something significant changes.

Each year we retain a smaller part of our Mission budget to be used flexibly during the year. This fund has been used to support members of the church family who are undertaking short term mission trips. The fund also supports local community needs and occasional gifts to other charities.

This year we were delighted to support both local and worldwide charities with gifts at Christmas. Below are the full 2025 details of our regular support and one-off gifts. We have seen people filled with overflowing love in our church family this year, contributing financially to the following Mission Partners:

Mission Partners

TEAR FUND	£2,400
CMS & SAMS	£1,200
MESSAGE TRUST	£1,200
BIBLE SOCIETY	£1,200
ALEXANDRIA LIBRARY	£1,200
NEW WINE	£2,400
THE HAMILTONS	£2,400
OPEN DOORS	£1,200
FUSION	£1,200
CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY	£1,200
NAKED TRUTH	£1,200
NORA STURGES HEALTH CENTRE	£1,200
CHRISTIANS IN SCHOOLS	£2,400
GLO	£1,500
AMAR (KBF)	£2,400
ST BARNABUS HATTERSLEY	£1,500
TOTAL	£ 25,800

We are so grateful for the continuous regular giving from our church family. The vast majority of our missional works and ongoing costs can only happen because of these donations and the gift aid we receive because of them.

Christmas Generosity

Your Christmas generosity was again overwhelming with (after available gift aid) over £4000 given in support of our initiatives.

Your giving enabled us to donate £900 to the Cherry Tree Project Christmas Food Hampers initiative and distribute 55 Christmas food vouchers and gifts to bless both our church family and the wider community, including families highlighted through our three local schools.

Money was more than matched with people's time, generosity and prayer, reaching out to our church family and community through Sundays and mid-week outreach activities, demonstrating Loving Community in action. THANK YOU

One Off Gifts

In addition to the regular support of our Mission Partners the balance of the mission budget was given to support local partners, members of our church on short term mission trips and some one off gifts to specific charities covering a range of our values including emergency response. In 2025 we gave various gifts totalling £14,800.

Headline Figures

Income 2025	
Donations & legacies	£335,172
Other income	£ 21,418
	£356,590
Expenditure 2025	
Grants & world mission	£40,600
Church activities	£145,236
Church maintenance & admin	£216,759
	£402,594
Surplus expenditure over income	£46,004
Cash at bank and short term investments	£174,471



Following Jesus

Alpha

In 2025, we ran two Alpha courses; an evening course in the spring term at the LifeCentre and then another one running up to Christmas in a home.

It is such a privilege and joy to journey with people who are asking questions and searching for Jesus. We had fun, made new friends, ate (probably too much!), and met Jesus together. And then the Holy Spirit came ... Two people were also baptised at the end of November as a result of doing Alpha – fabulous!

Thanks to all who helped – welcoming, running groups, cooking and washing up. We couldn't do it without you.



Kirstie Goddard

Youth Church

This year has been one of growth, transition, and real momentum across our youth community. Following the summer, many of our young people returned full of passion after serving at New Wine and attending Luminosity. Alongside this, we experienced a transition in leadership that opened the door for new voices, fresh ideas, and renewed vision. Across all our youth spaces, we've seen deeper friendships forming and faith being lived out more confidently.

Youth Church has continued to thrive, with increased crossover between Sunday Youth Church and midweek groups. Relationships have been strengthened, building a stronger sense of belonging. One of the highlights of the year was our Youth Takeover Service. It gave young people the opportunity to use their gifts, serve the wider church, and experience what it means to be part of the whole body of Christ. The excitement around planning the next Youth Takeover is already building, and it's clear how empowering these moments are for our young people.

Anna Macaulay

TNT & TBN

TNT (Ages 11–15)

It's been a joy to welcome new faces into TNT this year. After a lively (and slightly chaotic!) start, the group has settled into a strong rhythm. We've seen genuine joy and spiritual growth as young people explore what it means to have a faith of their own. Learning to read the Bible, pray, and connect with God in ways they can understand has been incredibly encouraging. Friends have been invited along, joining in the fun and the journey of faith, and we're excited for this to become the norm in 2026. Recently, we've been exploring the Gospel of Mark through our "Lead Like Jesus" series - one session looked at the idea of Jesus being interruptible, and how God can surprise us with new opportunities when life doesn't go to plan - this really struck a cord.

TBN (Ages 15–18)

Across TBN, we've seen young people grow in character, confidence, and leadership. Many are living this out in school and beyond - leading prayer, engaging deeply with Scripture, and contributing thoughtfully to discussions.

One standout topic requested by the group was "healthy ambition". We hosted a panel with church members working in various spheres of society, giving young people space to ask honest questions and dream about the future. Several youth chose to be baptised in November, publicly declaring their faith. Others have been on or they are preparing for mission trips in the UK and overseas, which has been hugely encouraging for the whole church, as they share testimonies of their experiences.

We are so thankful for our incredible youth teams. Their energy, care, creativity, and faith have shaped every session. Welcoming new team members has brought fresh perspectives and valuable experience, and we're excited to continue building the team - especially within Youth Church on Sundays. With growing links to local church youth groups, OneLife Conference, and plans for a weekend away, we look ahead to 2026 with faith and expectation. God is clearly at work among our young people, and we're excited to see what He has in store next.

Anna Macaulay

Following Jesus

Mini Church & Kids Church

Over the past 12 months, it has been a joy to welcome several new members into our Mini & Kids Church family. Sunday mornings have been filled with fun and meaningful activities, allowing children to explore God's special truths through multi-sensory experiences such as story time, prayer, craft, and games. It has been a privilege to witness the children grow in their knowledge of God and to see them regularly demonstrate their understanding of His love for them. They are truly forming a vibrant community of young Jesus followers.

This year, Mini's & Kid's Church has been a beautiful reminder of how eager children are to grow in their faith and deepen their understanding of God. Week after week, we see His presence in their lives, and it is an incredible blessing to witness their spiritual growth and enthusiasm.

Our group at Chads is remarkable. Each child is on their own journey of getting to know Jesus and discovering who He has made them to be. As leaders, we have the privilege of joining them on this journey for just an hour each week, and it has been deeply rewarding. Through numerous creative activities, the children consistently bring creativity, colour, and energy beyond anything we as leaders could imagine.

The children have demonstrated a profound hunger to know God. They are learning how to wait on Him through stillness and quiet reflection, and some have even shared that they hear from God during these times—an inspiring testament to their openness to His voice.

Kids Church has become an environment where children are not only learning about the Bible but also applying its teachings to their daily lives. Their curiosity is evident in the thoughtful questions they ask and the meaningful discussions they engage in. Many children are reading their Bibles regularly and sharing what they learn with friends. For our younger children in Mini's, we strive to bring Bible stories to life in creative and engaging ways, helping them connect with God's Word in a way that is both fun and meaningful.

As a team, with Katie and Alys encouraging, resourcing, and nurturing the team through meetings and shared leadership, it is a joy-filled environment and a true privilege to be serving together in this ministry.

The following reflection, shared by a member of the Mini Church team, captures a meaningful moment that highlights the heart and impact of our ministry with young children:

"During one Sunday morning in Mini Church, I was particularly struck by the warmth and confidence of the children. As I sat down, one child approached me to say hello of her own accord, and as worship began, another came to proudly show me her toy. Throughout the worship time, several of the girls gathered near the end of our row waving, dancing, and playing with joy and freedom. At the close of the service, my husband remarked, 'You were very popular this morning,' which beautifully captured the spirit of the moment.

God placed strongly on my heart that morning the significance of what is happening within Mini Church. At present, the group is made up entirely of girls — unusual for this age group — and it felt like a clear reminder that we are nurturing and discipling young girls of God. These are girls whom He knows deeply, loves completely, and has plans for, and whom He is faithfully shaping into women who will walk confidently in Him."

As we reflect on this past year, we are filled with gratitude for all that God has done in Mini's & Kid's Church. Yet we believe there is still much more to come. With your continued prayers, support, and perhaps even your involvement, we can continue to make a lasting impact on the lives of these children.

Mini Church & Kids Church Team



Glorifying God

Worship

The worshipping life of our church is about so much more than music, but here's a flavour of that part of it!

We are always trying to keep our music fresh and new, without losing a sense of familiarity, so we all feel at home when singing in worship. Our list of songs is ever-changing – we really appreciate feedback about it! Whilst the Psalms have plenty of examples of songs about 'me', at the time of writing we want to increase the range of songs we sing 'about' and 'to' God, putting the focus back on Him and away from being too preoccupied with ourselves.

9.15

We continue to try new gentle ways to keep the music fresh. Thanks to Ken, Geoff and Bob who have enriched the service with their music-making, we are now relying less on the hymn videos, and have more frequent live music! We are also continuing to try using live music during parts of the Communion prayers, and gradually increasing the range of songs and hymns we use, so there is slightly more crossover with some of the 11am songs. That means when we all gather for joint services, there'll be a greater shared knowledge of the songs. Thanks to Craig for manning the sound desk almost every single week, and Mike Wade for the times he operates the visuals.

11.00

Huge thanks to Kirsty Pitt for navigating the termly rota plan, to the full team on sound desk and visuals, and to the musicians and singers who make up our bands. As I write this it's the depth of winter, and those cold rehearsal nights in church require some resilience – it doesn't go unnoticed! We've welcomed a few new faces to our bands, and always love the chance to find more. So if you're a closet high-standard musician or singer, do let me know!

We try to get the balance right between good quality music, and an attitude of simplicity and humility which doesn't distract anyone else from worshipping freely. Playing and singing is only the half of it – it's equally about having a pastoral heart for our congregation and following the prompts of the Holy Spirit.

A note about the sound system: you'll be aware almost every Sunday there's a glitch or fault. At the time of writing we are looking into a significant upgrade with the aim of addressing this. We hope that by the summer we will have new loudspeakers, in new positions, which will make our worship experience better for everyone. Watch (or listen to) this space!

Mark Warburton





Loving Community

Mini Chadders

I want to begin by thanking the incredible volunteer teams who make everything within Mini Chadders possible. As I stepped into this role, I was very aware that the first months of 2025 (and earlier) were carried by faithful and generous individuals who went above and beyond with their time, resources, and love for our community. I am deeply grateful for their commitment and for the way they continue to serve families so wholeheartedly.

These teams have shown such care and flexibility and have warmly welcomed me into the role of Young Families Lead. I began in May, and it has been a real joy to be part of Mini Chadders and to get to know people across all that we do. My desire - and prayer - is that every child and every family who comes through the doors of any Mini Chadders group would know just how deeply loved they are.

In 2025, we began a clear vision that we will continue to build on. At the heart of Mini Chadders are six biblical affirmations - foundational truths from Scripture that we hope every child will carry with them throughout their lives. These affirmations shape everything we do and underpin our teaching, activities, and the way we build relationships with families:

**I Am Brave. I Am Loved. I Am Light.
I Have Hope. I Have Peace. I Have Joy.**

Throughout the year we have run toddler groups, baby groups, and Just4Dads sessions. Alongside our regular groups, we have enjoyed a Greek summer meal for mums, quiz and curry nights for dads, visits from school children, bouncy castle fun, and movie nights. We have also held glow parties, tea parties, and summer parties - lots of fun.

Alongside this, I would like to thank **Rachel Dixon and Adele Youde** for supporting **BLAST**, particularly as we step into a season of change. BLAST will be moving from a weekly group to termly 'BLAST Specials', with the aim of encouraging and enabling even more children to experience Jesus through this ministry.

It has been a joy to see hundreds of families come through these groups. Alongside this, we have had many meaningful conversations, seen people come along to church from the groups, and had opportunities to offer prayer and support to families.

Christmas was a particular highlight. Mini Chadders families were invited to St Chads for a Nativity Trail around the church, journeying from meeting Mary and Gabriel, to toasting marshmallows at the shepherds' campfire, making a crown with the kings, and finally receiving a gift from the innkeeper - the one who said "yes" to Jesus that first Christmas - alongside an invitation for families to say "yes" to Him this Christmas too.

It was a fun and meaningful way to share the Christmas story together. One grandad commented, "It's brilliant - we usually take them to see Santa, but this is telling them another story... well actually, it's the story of Christmas, isn't it?" It was wonderful to see eyes opening to Jesus, from the youngest to the oldest.

As we look ahead, I continue to pray that the seeds sown this year will take root and grow, and that we will see Jesus moving powerfully among families in Romiley and beyond. Our next affirmation, "I Am Loved," will shape the coming term, and I am praying that it will be a season full of healing as God's love is poured out on children, parents, and carers.

Special Thanks

Finally, I want to express heartfelt thanks to all those who continue to volunteer so faithfully across Mini Chadders. Thank you to the teams who serve at **Baby Buddies**, and especially to our team leader **Sarah Lawrence** for her commitment and leadership.

Thank you also to the **Prammies** team, led by **Jan Ford and Adele Youde**, and to the **Just4Dads** team, led by **Dan Pomfret**. Each of these teams plays a vital role in welcoming families and creating warm, safe spaces where God's love can be shared.

A special thank you to the **Prammies set-up team**, who arrive every Tuesday at 4:15pm to set up the room. This group honestly blows me away each week - it feels like a personal gift to me, as I have a bad back and genuinely couldn't do it without them.

Mini Chadders would not be possible without the time, energy, and faithfulness of these volunteers, and I am deeply thankful for all that they give.

Hannah Bettany



Loving Community



Oasis

January began with mixed weather, but that didn't deter anyone. As people returned to Oasis after Christmas, the atmosphere was filled with cheerful cries of "Happy New Year" and "Oh, it's so good to be back – I really missed Mondays!" People soon began engaging with one another, sharing stories and holiday activities, and happily getting involved in board games, jigsaws, and number and word activities.

Lindsay's exercise group continues to flourish, with up to 29 people now eagerly attending each session. A health visitor was also invited to speak about age-related activities available within the community.

Our yearly day trip to Llandudno on one of the warmest days of the year was a success with a meal in one of the hotels, then a leisurely walk down the promenade.

In August, Oasis closed for about a month while a brand-new kitchen was fitted. All the volunteers agree it now feels brighter and more spacious, with much-needed additional cupboard space – truly "a place for everything and everything in its place."

Pastoral Visiting

As we look back over the last year, there is much that God has done that we praise Him for.

We thank God for –

- The love, commitment and faithfulness of all the Visiting team, who regularly visit some 15 people who are unable to attend church as they once did. We are grateful to every member of the team for what they do (which is often unseen) and to Ian Dixon for giving Communion (when requested).
- The prayers of many being answered. Each week there are pastoral prayers for those in need led by Ros Lloyd in the LifeCentre. And thanks to everyone who prays in response to the requests for the Care Home services – you are such an encouragement!

Our "Thought for the Day" continues to connect people with God and His love for us. For example, Katie spoke about the sunflower, explaining how it turns its head towards the sun, and linked this to turning towards God. Ken spoke about Bear Grylls and his strength in overcoming adversity, relating this to how God helps us through difficult times.

In the autumn, Ken and Stan once again came together to discuss Christmas cards. Stan Frohlich designed modern Christmas cards that were sold at Oasis and the LifeCentre, with a donation sent to Signpost – for Carers (Stockport).

The Christmas party was a roaring success, with quizzes, excellent food, and an amazingly talented group of singers from Rainbow.

With God's help and the dedication of our wonderful volunteers, this ministry continues to thrive. We truly appreciate your prayers and ongoing support.

Janice Hogg & Ken Earith

- Being able to hold monthly services at 2 local Care Homes. Thanks to those (including some from St Barnabas in Bredbury) who faithfully attend, use their gifts and show God's love. The favour shown to us by the staff and the smiling faces of some of the residents who attend are another answer to prayer.
- Our young folk, who again sang Christmas carols to several elderly people at their homes, reminding them that they are not forgotten.
- The active support and engagement of the clergy team, who work with us as they care for God's family here.

Grateful as we are for all God is doing, we are conscious that there is still room for improvement; please pray that God shows us what more we can do to serve Him.

Irene & John Rockley



Loving Community

Early Life

We have had a wonderful year in our lovely new home at number 1.

Referral for baskets have increased and this year we provided 145 baskets full of essential items for Mums and their babies, packed with much love and care.

In our new home we have been able to increase the range of donations we can accept. This year we have been able to provide, prams, cots, changing units, high chairs, toys, baby baths, clothes and shoes for babies and children up to 2 years!

Apart from requests for car seats (which we can't give out because of safety legislation) we have been able to say yes to all requests and referrals.

New people have joined our team and whenever there is a job to be done one of them will always say yes, it's who they are.

We were delighted to meet Bishop Mark when he visited Romiley last year. He greatly encouraged us and prayed before he left using the words from Psalm 139. "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb"

He talked about the fact that knitting is a creative and intentional process needing both hands. That God created and knows each of these babies.

As we continue to pray for each Mum and their baby we know that God hears and that he is working. Such a privilege to do this work for his glory.

Sally King

Cherry Tree

The Cherry Tree Project supports our local community, particularly young people and those experiencing social or financial poverty. We do this from our HUB on Cherry Tree and from the Guywood Centre. All of this happens to show and share the love of Jesus, and though a separate legal entity from St Chads, we are very much partners. Many (though by no means all) of our volunteers are members of St Chads.

Each week we have provided food parcels to 35 households. And on Fridays, served lunch on Cherry Tree to local people who are socially isolated. At Christmas, food hampers or supermarket vouchers were given out to local households and those on Cherry were treated to a full Christmas lunch.

Our weekly young people's sessions continue on Cherry Tree. This year we have welcomed in a number of "cared for" children, which is a beautiful privilege. We continue to run busy school holiday clubs. Christmas included a disco, movie afternoon and visit to the Christmas Eve 4pm service.

Our "Reloved" school uniform recycling project is just over a year old. We took our first referral at Easter, and to date, we have collected, processed and saved over 2 tonnes of re-loveable uniform from landfill (the weight of a white rhino) and supplied uniform packets to 350 young people.

Creating community and pointing people to Jesus are hallmarks of all we do. We welcome your prayers, particularly at this time for continued funding, managing our ever increasing costs and legal responsibilities, and for vision. Thank you to everyone at St Chads for your love, prayer and support – both financially and in hours served!

Warm Spaces

The Warm Space sits alongside the food provision. A beautiful community is now well established, where some of those picking up food bags stay on for hot drinks and a bite to eat.

They are hosted by a wonderful team from St Chads/The Cherry Tree Project who enable conversations and build up relationships. At 11am, we pause for the "God slot", a precious, protected time, where a word about God is shared followed by a response of prayer and worship. We have seen the hungry fed, hearts opened, stories told, friendships built, and the love of God and immense joy outpoured.

We thank our team of volunteers who offer themselves week in, week out.

**Rachel Bresnahan, Inge Challinor
& Jill Hookway**

Loving Community

LifeCentre

The Romiley LifeCentre is a vital part of our ministry and mission to Romiley, established to bless our community. Staffed by over 80 dedicated volunteers, it continues to flourish as a hub of connection and service. Many of our volunteers express how serving here has also been a blessing in their own lives. We extend heartfelt thanks to each one for partnering with us to share God's love in this place.

We have taken a step towards being bolder in declaring our faith and beliefs. With this in mind, we have decorated a wall with a beautiful piece of artwork that declares biblical truth, along with framed scripture in the sofa corner. In this way, each guest is surrounded by reminders of God's love and truth.

Stockport Christian Counselling regularly uses our facilities for counselling sessions and management meetings, as do Christians Against Poverty, who will again run their Money Course at the LifeCentre in 2026. Stockport Credit Union also has access to our meeting rooms when needed.

EarlyLife has found a happy home for its mission to support new mums in No. 1. This volunteer-led initiative provides hampers and essential items to mothers and babies through referrals from healthcare providers, who are deeply grateful for this service.

Stay & Play continues to thrive, offering families a safe and well-equipped environment for play. Our Adoption & Fostering support group meets regularly, providing peer support for those on their family-building journey.



The LifeCentre café remains a warm, welcoming space offering delicious meals and opportunities to connect. The Talking Table has become a crucial part of our ministry, encouraging conversation over a cuppa and offering a place where those who need assistance can ask for it. We remain a Trussell Trust Foodbank location, providing food vouchers to those in need, and the Talking Table helps ensure that those who require this support know that we are here to help.

The bookshop has been restocked this year and hosted three Meet the Author events with Phil Bray, Andy Kind and Katy Hollamby—Christian authors whose books are filled with light and hope. These evenings gave people the opportunity to hear the authors read from their work and share the stories behind their books. They have also proved to be a wonderful way to use the café space in the evening.

Our conference facilities continue to serve local institutions, businesses and St Chad's ministries, while also hosting groups that promote community wellbeing.

Knit & Gather fosters creativity and community, bringing together people of different ages while blessing local groups with items made through their generosity and skill.

At Christmas, we hosted glass decoration workshops and a wreath-making workshop. These events gave us valuable time and space to build connections within our community and extend invitations to church services and Alpha. This was in addition to the Café Carols, which is always a wonderful occasion and was attended by over 50 people. The front door decorations also celebrated Jesus coming to earth as a baby, helping to share more of the heart of the LifeCentre.

Looking ahead, St Chad's will run the Alpha course at the LifeCentre in 2026, offering people the opportunity to explore life's meaning over shared meals. From these gatherings have grown vital small groups that now meet weekly, providing a comfortable and safe environment where people can explore faith surrounded by God's love.

Lesley Cranwell & Katie Wade

Final word...

2025 has not been defined by dramatic change but by steady, faithful growth. We have seen increasing depth in prayer, strengthening in team leadership, wise adaptation in ministry structures, ongoing community engagement, and real stories of transformed lives. We have also enjoyed welcoming new members to St Chads, in particular a number of couples in the 20-30s.

We live in uncertain and often polarised times - both in the Church of England and in wider society. Through these, I am as convinced as ever that our shared goals of: Glorifying God, Loving Community and Following Jesus, give us a clear direction as we pray for and serve together to see More People, More Like Jesus.

May we continue in 2026 with courage, humility and expectancy for all that God will do among us.

Richard Pennystan



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