

SOUTHWARK

◆ CATHEDRAL ◆

The Dean's Report 2025



The Dean's Report

The Very Reverend Dr Mark Oakley

After a year and a half in post, people often ask me what a Dean does. It's always a helpful question as it makes me focus!

I usually reply by telling them that Deans have four hats. The first is being the leader of the Cathedral as a worshipping and missional community. The second is being the Chair of the Chapter, the Trustee body of the Cathedral as Charity, ensuring good governance and compliance, and that all activities further the Chapter's charitable objects and be undertaken in a way which provides public benefit. The third is that of being the senior priest of the Diocese, attending the Bishop's Staff Meeting, Diocesan Synod and other Diocesan events. Lastly, the Dean is a representative of the Cathedral and the Christian community in the locality, forging good relationships with local government, interest groups, businesses, charities, ecumenical friends and other faith communities. Each meeting or event I go to in a day means putting on at least one of these hats, making for a varied, and sometimes demanding, diary. When I walk to work each morning, I feel very grateful to be here and I never quite know what is coming my way that day!

As Dean you quickly become aware that you can't do all this yourself and that you rely on the expertise, generosity, advice, and friendship of so many people. These make the ministry of being Dean a real privilege and, often, great fun. Since last year's Report, two key appointments have been made in this regard. We have welcomed Paul Smith as Chief Operating Officer, and Ted Halshaw as Chief Finance Officer. Both have settled in really well and are bringing considerable skills to the role, as well as setting a tone in the working of the Cathedral by being accessible, calm and transparent. In 2024 we had to say goodbye to Emily Halton as she was appointed Governance Officer at Christian Aid, but it has been a delight to welcome Eleanor Davies as Governance and Committees Manager and she is proving to be the perfect replacement. We also said goodbye to Thomas Sharp who, having served the Cathedral as Succentor and Minister in Charge of St Hugh's, was appointed Tutor in Pastoral Theology at St Augustine's College. We wish him every happiness in his new ministry.

It is important as we look back over the last year that we also acknowledge with gratitude the work of Isabel Merrifield who, as an interim

COO, helped a seamless transition to a new appointment, and also brought great experience from which we could draw. Other cathedrals are now using her in similar ways – word got around! It is also essential that we thank Daniel Chumbley for his many years as Cathedral Warden. Daniel has served the Cathedral, and will continue to, in a variety of ways. As Warden, he has represented the Cathedral at Chapter, been pastorally sensitive, and clear thinking in his scrutiny and advice. Personally, he has been a supportive friend to me as I have settled in. We will have an opportunity to thank Daniel at the APCM. I also thank Linda, our other Warden, for her continuous positive approach, unwavering commitment, and practical good sense.

The most traumatic loss for us a community over the last year was the sudden and tragic death of Ian Keatley, our Director of Music. Ian was a skilled and admired musician, director, teacher and guide to choristers and many more, a musician's musician. He was therefore part of that wider family, in London and around the country, that Church Music pulls together, forging friendships and loyalty and esteem. He was part of the family of faith, someone who reflected on the heartland of this Cathedral and who took seriously the vocation to express that heartland through sound, through voices in communion with each other. We were sad at our loss but also devastated for his family. The Memorial Service we held for him was beautiful and will be remembered by so many for a long time. May he rest in peace.

We are enormously blessed at our Cathedral in having Simon Hogan and James Gough who have expertly continued choral life here with such skill and passion, and have done this with a willing and cooperative spirit, a genuine desire to ensure music lies at the heart of our worship and community life. We cannot thank them enough for all they are doing as we await the arrival of our new Director of Music in September. Helen Smee is joining us from Christ Church, Oxford, where she is currently the Director of the Cathedral's girls' choir. We very much look forward to welcoming her. I also must say that the Merbecke Choir also seems to go from strength to strength under the skilled direction of Emily Elias.

I am thrilled that Delorine Green has joined St Hugh's as Interim Minister in Charge. St Hugh's is a wonderful community and, as Thomas left, it was important that we found a pastor to journey with



them as a new chapter for St Hugh's is discerned. Delorine joins us at the Cathedral for the daily Office and in our weekly clergy meetings. She is a blessing to us all. Please make sure you say 'hello' to her when you can.

Sometimes life can be so busy that you don't always seem to have time to experience everything properly. It is so important, I find, to try and reclaim yourself and be present in the moment so that the full depth of things can be treasured and be held in proper gratitude. So many wonderful events have happened in the Cathedral over the last year that I simply cannot name them all here. Some stay in mind very firmly – the Cathedral Big Knit events in which over 3,000 people sat, chatted and made blankets for the homeless, the Robes SleepOut where we were joined by Rob Rinder, the receiving of our EcoChurch Silver Award after much hard work to reach the necessary sustainable standards, the Climate Justice fortnight in which so many events helped both reflection and commitment, the Cathedral Music Trust's Evensong attended by HRH the Duchess of Gloucester, the Society of Authors' award evening and the Sandford St Martin award evening for religious and ethics broadcasting, the ordination of 17 new deacons, as well as the many Christmas carol services! I shall never forget the bishops dancing near the altar after our Black History Month service, nor the great reception we received by those lining the route of London Pride. So many thanked the Cathedral for being there, for

standing up against discrimination, giving us 'high fives', cheers and thumbs up as we marched. It was very moving.

2024 saw some unpleasant and threatening riots in parts of our country. I decided to visit the local mosques and synagogues in the spirit of friendship and solidarity. It was also good to take a group of about 25 from the Cathedral to the Neasden Temple. We could not have received a more friendly and hospitable welcome as we toured the Temple, sat in on an act of worship, and were assured of their prayers for us. I hope we will be able to welcome some of the Temple community to the Cathedral before too long. Ecumenically, it has been good to get to know some local Christian communities and I was especially thrilled when we went to St George's Roman Catholic Cathedral in Christian Unity Week to sing Evensong, and they came to us to sing Vespers. The Dean of St George's, Canon Michael Branch, was made an Ecumenical Canon in the year, and I was honoured to represent the Bishop and the Cathedral at a Solemn Vespers at St George's on the death of Pope Francis. It was also good to join the trip to Bergen Cathedral and to welcome friends from Rouen Cathedral over the last 12 months. I am grateful for the good work of our Unity Group in ensuring our ecumenical partnerships remain high on our agenda and a source of spiritual wisdom and fellowship.

I also began the 'Dean's Breakfast' which, every

couple of months, brings together around 10-12 local people who have probably never met before, for a simple croissant and coffee, and just over an hour's conversation. It is great to see good things come out of these chats and many partnerships and projects have been initiated around the table. This is the Cathedral having a 'convenor' role in the locality and over the last year I have welcomed people from such organisations as Shakespeare's Globe, the Children's Literacy Foundation, Central School of Ballet, Human Trafficking Foundation, Demelza Hospice for Children, the Africa Centre, Unicorn Theatre, Kinship Carers, local Police and Firefighters, Community Southwark, Redress, and the City of London.

Last year I outlined in the Dean's Report the themes that I hoped would provide the framework for a refreshed Vision for the Cathedral. I was pleased that conversations led to the final publication of this Vision and that an Operational Plan was drawn up quickly to ensure that it doesn't just remain a wish list that sits on the shelf, but is a living document that calls us back to our vocation and energises us to prioritise well. If you haven't read the Vision document, please do. You will see there that several areas of our mission as a Cathedral are highlighted for development. One of these is for a Social Justice Programme and it has been very humbling to work with so many partners working in the field of Modern Slavery, our chosen focus for this year. As well as awareness building, training, events and seminars, we have also hosted several groups of people who have been enslaved. I will never forget watching the Amies Freedom Choir, 12 women now liberated from various forms of slavery, singing in the Cathedral with tears in their eyes. Please come and support them when they return on Saturday 12 July. We also have the excellent Emily Kenway coming to give a talk on 'The Truth about Modern Slavery' on Thursday 19 June at 7pm.

One of the other many themes is that of Christian formation, the helping of all of us to deepen our Christian commitment and understanding. It has been good this year to shape up the 'Living Faithfully' programmes, which focus specifically on faith and spirituality. These have been well attended and have covered a diverse number of topics ranging from George Herbert's poetry and making a Rule of Life, to an introduction to Confession, and to the faith of some contemporary women artists. We have also begun to produce some podcasts which, though early days, are proving to be popular with a number of people

both from the Cathedral and outside. Do give me some ideas for the podcasts you'd like to hear.

One of the many joys of being the Dean of Southwark is working with Bishop Christopher. I admire him enormously, and we thank him for his total support of the Cathedral, and at the Cathedral we enjoy friendships in the team he has built for leadership in the Diocese. We welcomed Bishop Alastair to Woolwich this year, although he is well known to us as a former Archdeacon, and also Archdeacon Chigor to Lewisham and Greenwich. It was good to invite the Archdeacons of the Diocese to preach on Sundays through the year. I have been trying to keep our College of Canons up to date with the life of the Cathedral by occasional newsletters and it has been good to have positive feedback and the assurance of their prayers for us. Here, I also want to thank my fantastic clergy colleagues at the Cathedral. I am so fortunate to have them alongside and to have their advice, commitment and sense of fun.

Finally, as I said at the Chrism Eucharist, it has been a cruel and painful time for victims of abuse over this last year. It has been an angry, disillusioning time, for those of us who serve in the Church of England. It has been, in so many ways, a time of shame. Every time we thought we could see light at the end of the tunnel, we discovered it was an oncoming train – and all this at a time when some of our international leaders seem to want to make it on earth as it is in hell. It is not only a time of shame and deep sorrow, but also dislocating and unsure.

Every time we gather at the Cathedral for worship, I know that we remain restless for what is right and just. We bring ourselves back to the One who is the compass of our souls, and to the heartland of our vocation, and to the God we see in the human face of Jesus Christ who calls us to be together and start afresh, with love, and in friendship and for the world's good. We know as eucharistic Christians that something has to break and something has to give, if new life is ever to break through, in institutions and in human hearts.

Recently, Rowan Williams made some comments about young people and religion using an analogy. He said: 'People are asking to be given a cello or a football; to be introduced to new habits of deliberate attention, ritual, and adjustment to what claims to be a different and liberating level of reality.'

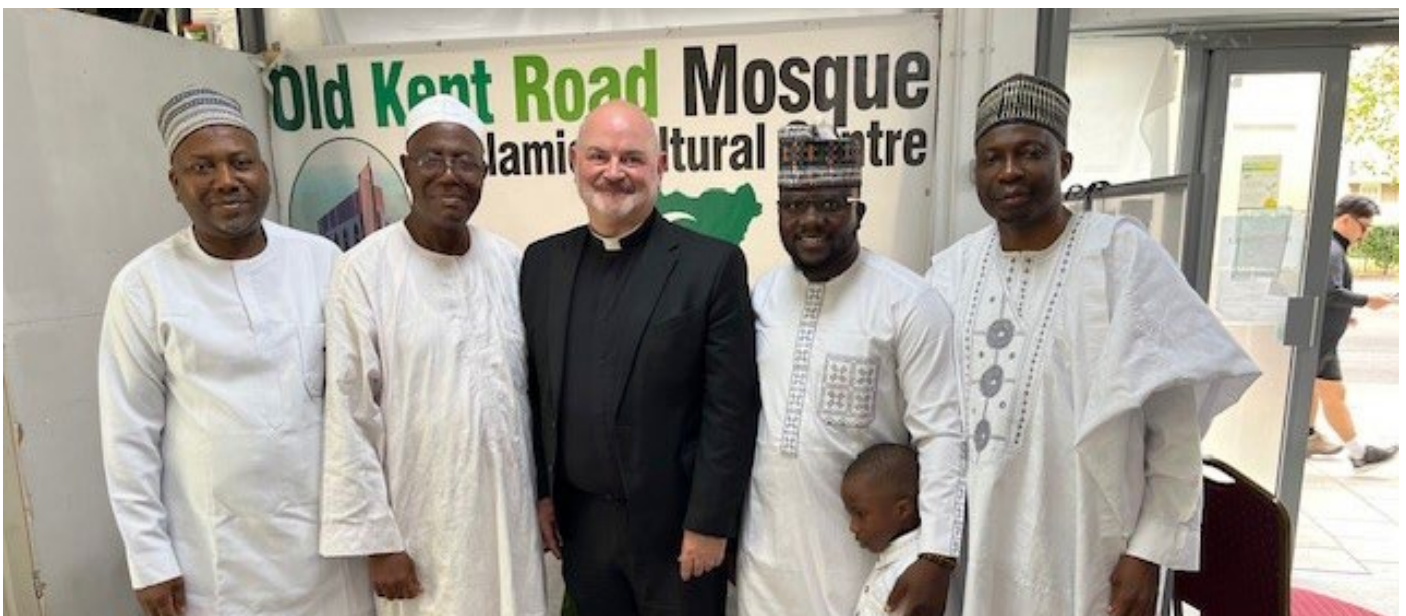
'Not least, they often want to learn a spiritual

pattern that takes them beyond a short-lived emotional high. They are not looking to be entertained (plenty of that elsewhere), but to be changed. And they have a 'nose' for traditions, however apparently eccentric or archaic, that suggest ways of learning to inhabit new dimensions, traditions that take them seriously enough to ask something of them. They want more than reassurance, primary-school cheeriness, or even neat theoretical answers. And surprisingly large numbers of them seem to be quite unworried by being asked to take time over this.

'Those of us who are asking what we need in a new pope or Archbishop of Canterbury need to sit and think this through a bit. For many younger people, the problem with what they encounter in many churches is not difficulty, incomprehensibility, but shallowness and anxiety, the impression (fair or not) that, since its all very complicated, we have to apologise and explain all the time, to stop even more folk running away. Confidence in the transforming potential of what we are talking about is essential – the confidence not of a successful problem-solver but of a seasoned musician or footballer or mediator. This is worth taking trouble with; you are worth taking trouble with, taking time with.'

I think Bishop Rowan is right – and not just about young people, but all of us. Praying, working, and being together here as Southwark Cathedral, you have my promise that I will do all I can to ensure the Cathedral is a place of spiritual depth, with both a seriousness and some fun. I will work to ensure our worship is reverential, that preaching

helps us dive deeper, and that pastoral care is patient and supportive. I will also work to communicate our life and belief to those outside – and I know that you will join me in this. We must introduce people to what we have the privilege of sharing. If you haven't recently, invite someone to join you one Sunday! All of us are called to share our faith and introduce others to the love in which restless and fractured hearts can rest. I will also, and again I will need your help, do all I can to ensure our finances will sustain us over the coming years. Just as our home costs have gone up, so have our Cathedral costs, and I ask for your generosity to help us preserve our building and develop our life and Christian service. I will work, too, to ensure our Cathedral is safe, upholds the dignity of everyone, and 'makes space for love' with hearts, minds and souls. This is work that makes being Dean, no matter how many hats, both fulfilling and a real privilege. Thank you so much for all you give me, and this Cathedral and community we love. Let's refresh our loyalty to our future – and may God bless us on that journey together.



Stand out moments

2024



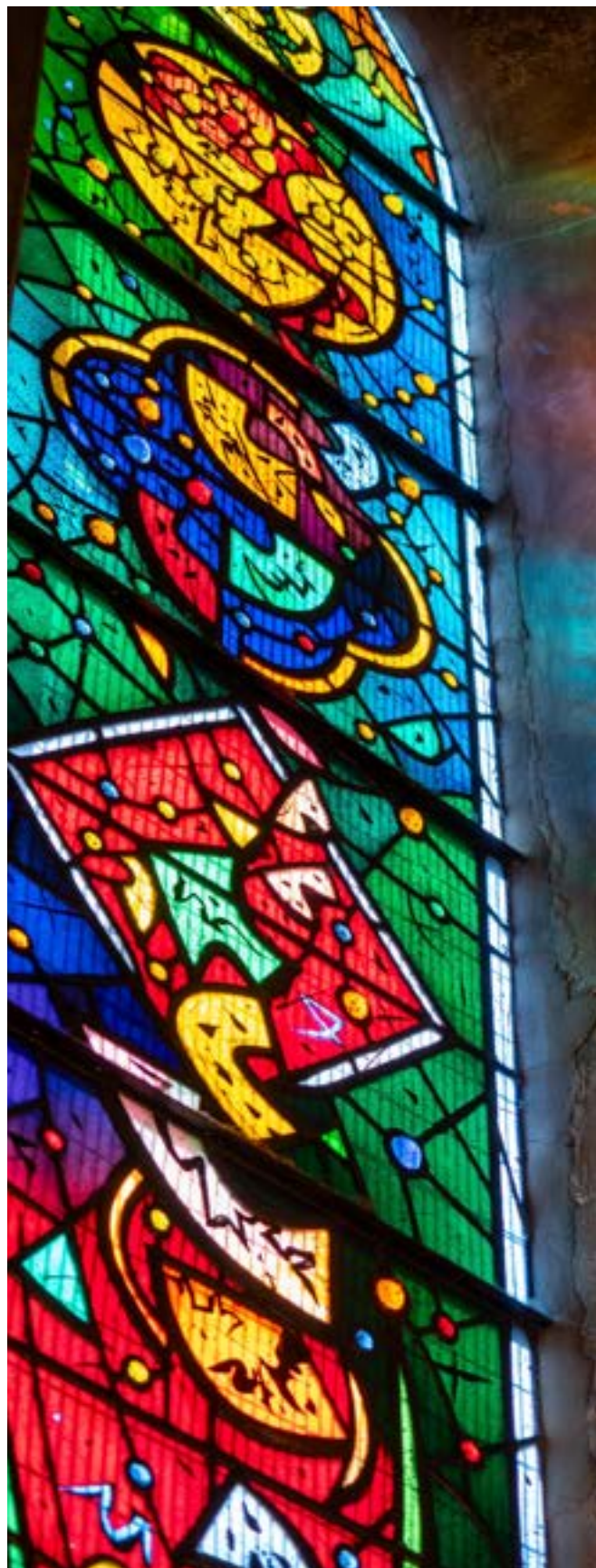


Chapter

Gill Reynolds, Senior Non-Executive Member

2024 was Chapter's second full year operating in its newly constituted form post the Cathedrals' Measure 2021, and it was a very full year.

Alongside recruiting our two new Chief Officers, who are both making a significant and positive impact on how Chapter operates, we pursued a full agenda. We developed a new Vision and Strategy for the Cathedral's life over the next 5 years which has now been translated into an operational plan. We recognised the urgent need for a Property strategy to determine the long term plans for each of the properties we hold, alongside a programme of works to bring them up to an acceptable condition. These are both now being implemented. Working with the Diocese, we continue to focus on finding a solution for the All Hallows' church site which we plan to have in place by the end of this year, although we are significantly dependent on external parties for achieving this. We set up a Heritage Group to create a plan for presenting our heritage to all who come to the Cathedral, working with the Visitor Engagement team, and also to address items of contested heritage. Our ability to bring our aspirations for the Cathedral and our community to fruition depends on finding additional sources of funds, so alongside efforts to maximise earning from the assets we hold, we are also developing a plan for Fundraising. Our aspirations also rely on making the Cathedral a safe space for all and Chapter is very mindful of its responsibilities in this respect, hence discussion of Safeguarding features on every Chapter meeting agenda. We look forward to a fruitful year ahead in 2025.



Safeguarding

The Reverend Canon Kathryn Fleming, Chapter Safeguarding Lead

2024 was not a good year for Safeguarding in the Church of England, the publication of the Makin Report into historic abuse by John Smyth created what amounted to an institutional earthquake which ultimately led to the resignation of Justin Welby as Archbishop of Canterbury.

Nevertheless, while taking every care to avoid complacency, it has been a year in which our splendid volunteer Cathedral Safeguarding Officers, Helen Quintrell, Jill Tilley and Cherry James have continued to work with dedication and wisdom to ensure that Southwark Cathedral is as safe as we can make it. Thankfully we were not directly affected by the Makin findings, though the publicity they rightly received has inspired others to come forward and share stories. The Church can and must do better and we are committed to making that journey in whatever ways we can.

Summary of the year

Safeguarding Sunday 2024 fell immediately after the Makin Report, giving added impetus to our renewed commitment as a congregation to this essential work. With a change in the office, we're very grateful to Eleanor Davies, who ensures that all the necessary DBS checks and Safeguarding training of staff is up to date, while Sharda Rozena takes on that same responsibility for our wonderful bank of volunteers. Training takes place online or in person – and we have received several compliments from those who have attended the in-person training which has been tailored to Cathedral needs by Helen Quintrell. Overall, we have kept her and her colleagues very busy this year, with 21 staff and 93 volunteers completing the requisite training, at levels from Basic through to Senior Leadership. Because training needs to be updated every three years, this is an operation not unlike painting the Forth Bridge – but it is really good to know that everyone has received the appropriate training which should enable us to meet the new National Safeguarding Standards, which focus on Culture, Leadership and Capacity; Prevention; Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk; Victims and Survivors and Learning; Supervision and Support.

As Chapter Safeguarding Lead, I continue to meet regularly with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and we are all beginning to look towards 2026 when Diocese and Cathedral will both be audited by the INEQE team, who are working their way round every diocese in the Church of England with a rigorous independent audit process. As part of our preparations for this, we will shortly be recruiting a part-time professional safeguarding colleague, based here at the cathedral, and we are already benefitting from the additional support of the Regional Safeguarding Lead for the South of England, who gives us access to the wider national picture and is an invaluable sounding-board.

We have recently conducted a “Lessons Learned” review based on a historic case, and it was comforting to realise how radically things have changed with regard to safeguarding, with systems improved out of all recognition from the 1980s, which were the focus of that review. With safer recruitment and DBS checks as non-negotiable elements in our recruitment of both staff and volunteers, with children and young people themselves more informed about good practice and with a wider awareness of just what safeguarding entails, we have at the very least a firm foundation. May I remind you, though, in closing that if you have a safeguarding concern, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, you have a responsibility to report it? Do please be in touch with one of the Cathedral Safeguarding Officers, whose contact details are on posters at the west end of the nave, in the Mandela Porch, in the Song School, in the Vestry, as well as on the Cathedral website and the weekly service sheets, or, if appropriate, speak to one of the clergy.

Safeguarding Officers

Keeping our Cathedral safe can be a heavy responsibility and I'm thankful to all of you who, by taking it seriously, make this part of my work so much less overwhelming.

Cherry James
Cathedral Office on 020 7367 6700
Email: cherry.james@southwark.anglican.org

Jill Tilley
Cathedral Office on 020 7367 6700
Email: jill.tilley@southwark.anglican.org

Helen Quintrell
Cathedral Office on 020 7367 6700
Email: hmqmc3@gmail.com

Finance Report

Daniel Chumbley, Chair of the Finance Committee

The Cathedral increased its income by 22% in 2024 which places it in a healthy position to meet continued underlying challenges but also realise its renewed vision and purpose.

Summary of the year

We have benefitted hugely this year from the arrival of our new Chief Financial Officer who has brought a renewed focus on how we ensure we become more financially sustainable. Income from donations, fundraising and receipts from our trading arm, Southwark Cathedral Enterprises Limited exceptionally increased in 2024. The introduction of a larger team of Cathedral hosts has led to increases in donations from visitors and we are pleased that our café partnership with Comptoir Gourmand continues during challenging times for the hospitality industry. The Cathedral Shop also saw higher sales following its re-location and continued creative focus on what it sells.

However, underlying trends suggest that the demands of running the Cathedral and addressing legacy issues, such as property maintenance, are very high. Our aim is to ensure that regular income pays for all running costs by 2027 and that our longer-term finances are more sustainable and stable. To support this, we continue to focus on identifying new income streams and attract new donors. We completed a strategic review of our property portfolio as the foundation to multi-year property repair and maintenance programme to ensure we increase rental income and invest for the long term. In partnership with the Diocese we have made progress to stem the cost of maintaining All Hallows Church and find a workable solution for the All Hallows site.

Donations

The spirit of generosity lies at the heart of everything we are able to do. In 2024, the Cathedral benefitted from increases in regular donations and giving and is hugely grateful to those who gave so generously. We have joined over 70 churches and 1500 givers in the Diocese in encouraging everyone who supports the Cathedral regularly to donate via the Parish Giving Scheme (www.paritygiving.org.uk).

The scheme was established in 2008 and is a charity run by the Church of England. It is simple to use and secure way for people to give. Donors are in control of their giving and using the scheme greatly reduces administration and paperwork for our finance team. Many people have transferred their planned giving to the scheme and we encourage everyone who feels able to follow suit. Continued use of contactless giving has also led to higher donations and the technology that accompanies contactless payment devices allows us to better monitor and track income from our congregation and our visitors.

Looking ahead to 2025

We are excited by our relaunched vision and purpose and there is much more we want to achieve to deliver it in 2025. We need to invest significantly in our property portfolio via a multi-year plan to ensure owning property is sustainable with the aim that income generated from it pays for repairs and maintenance in the future. Following the recruitment of a fundraiser in 2024, we are developing our fundraising and development activity to allow us to become more strategic in the way we approach new sources of funding. We are also keen to explore how we realise our strategic plan for the Cathedral buildings.

Supporting the Cathedral

We are grateful to everybody that has contributed to the life and mission of the Cathedral in 2024. Southwark Cathedral is an independent charity and receives no regular direct funding from government or other external bodies.

The future of the Cathedral depends upon continued financial support and our ability to realise our vision and purpose. If you can, please consider:

Setting up a regular donation via the Parish Giving Scheme – regular ongoing support helps us to plan and sustain our care of this great Cathedral for the future. www.parishgiving.org.uk

Making a one-off donation – historic buildings always need of support; from medieval stonework to our educational programmes, to maintaining our lovely garden – your gift will always make a difference.

Leaving a gift in your will – a legacy gift is one of the most effective ways you can support the Cathedral. Legacy gifts can be directed to support a chosen area of our work, or can be given free of restriction to enable them to be used where they are needed most.

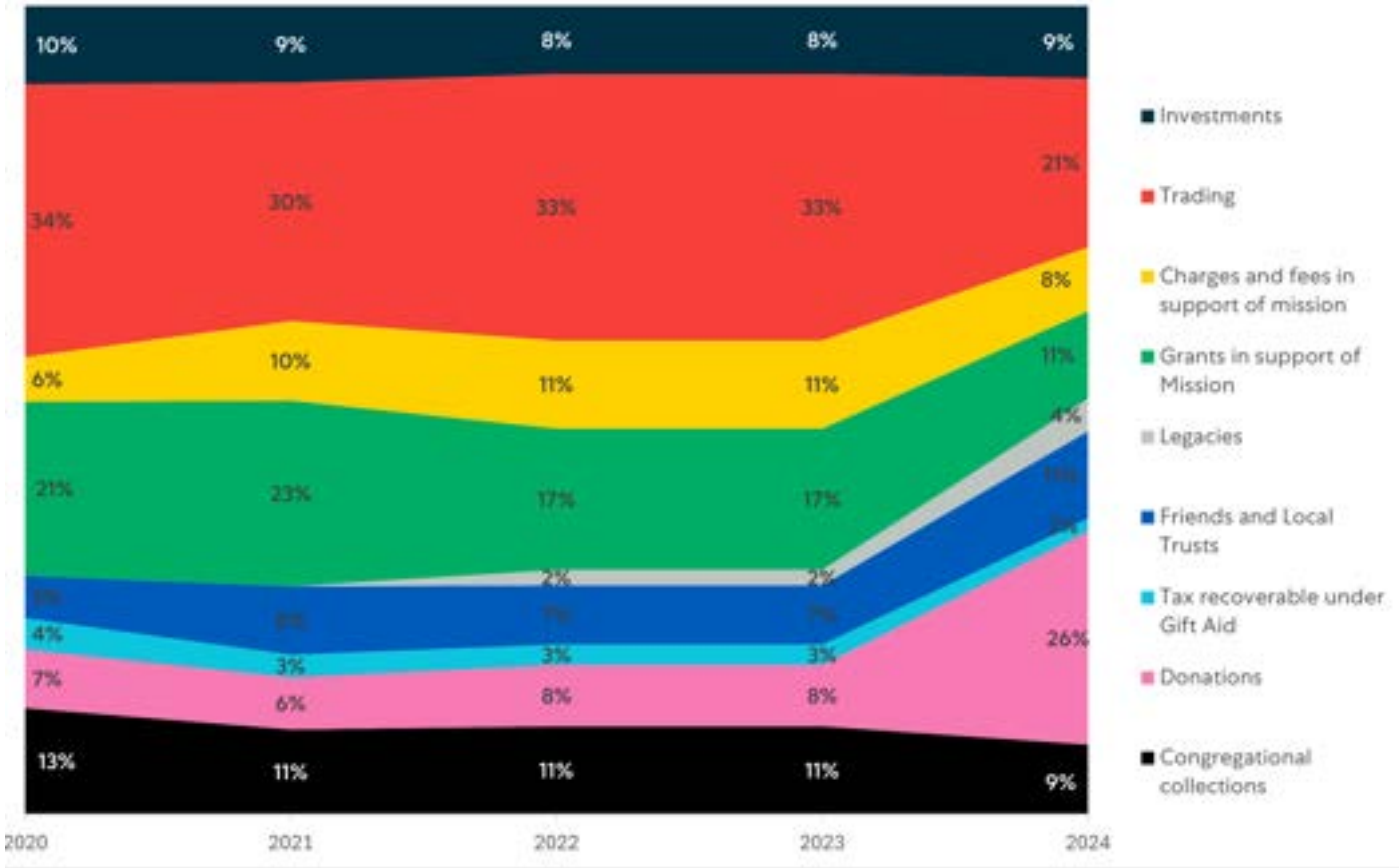
Supporting our music – ask for a one-off donation to be used to support the Cathedral choir, our organ and all the music that you hear and experience at the Cathedral.

Encourage learning and our young people – ask for a donation to be used to support educational activities and our work with young people. Becoming a volunteer – join our team of committed and loyal volunteers to play a vital part in the day-to-day running of this busy and thriving place.

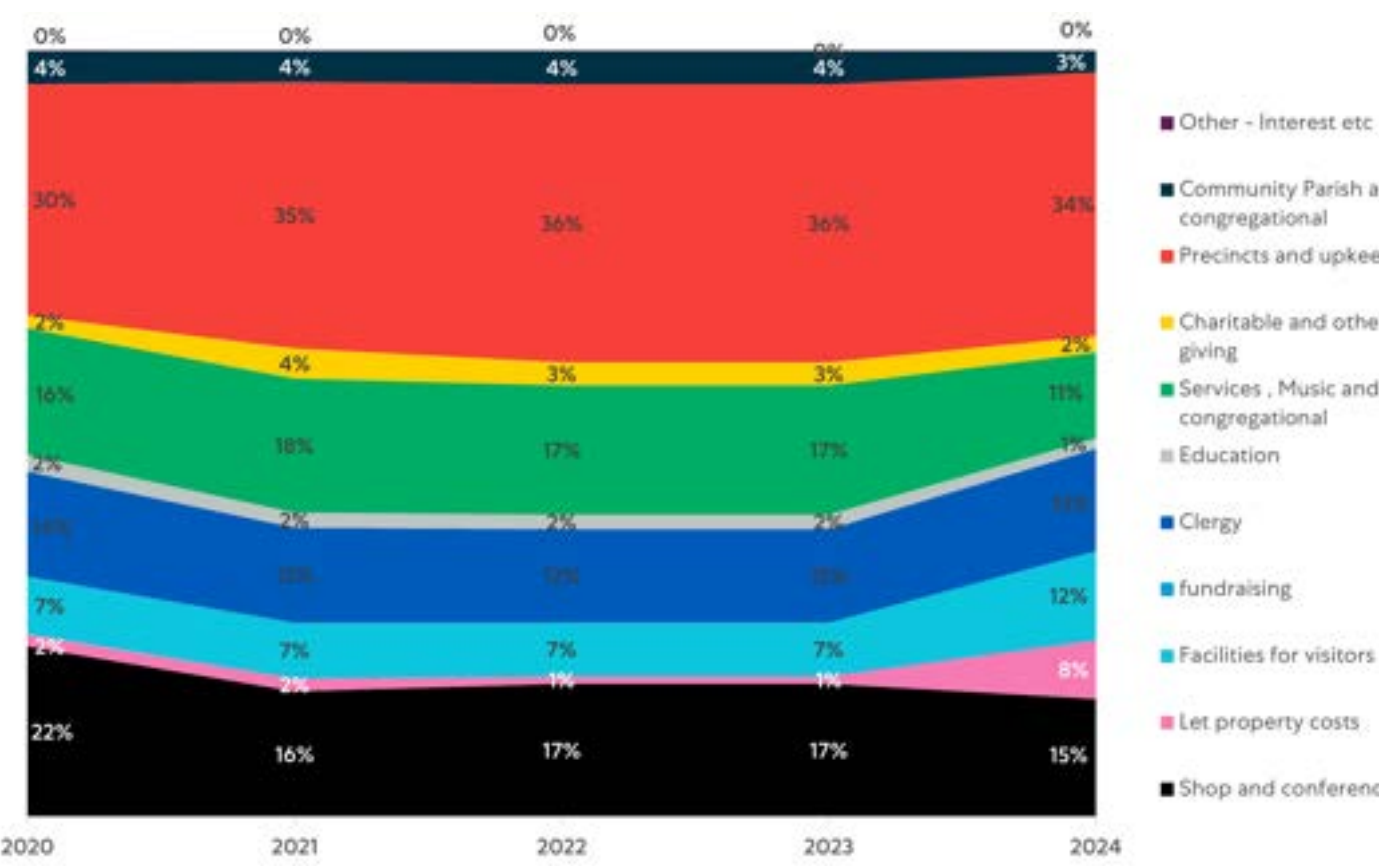
Joining the Friends of Southwark Cathedral – sign up to support us, make new friends and enjoy events through the year. To find out more about how you can support the Cathedral, please visit our website: <https://cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/support-us/>



Income breakdown



Expenditure breakdown



Southwark Cathedral Enterprises Limited

Richard Holman, Chair



Southwark Cathedral Enterprises Ltd, the Cathedral's commercial arm, continued to make steady progress in 2024.

Total revenue rose by £103K (12.5%) to £927K and the company's net profit, which it distributes to the Cathedral, was £437K, an improvement of £18K (4.3%) on 2023. 55% of the company's income was derived from events, 23% from the shop, 15% from meeting room hire and 7% came in the form of license fees from the café.

Rose Harding has again brought in an eclectic mix of events, providing immensely valuable income for the Cathedral while avoiding activities that unduly interrupt its life as a centre of Christian worship. The core of the music programme was the thirty-six candlelight concerts promoted by Fever and we also hosted concerts for a number of schools, including Highgate, Alleyn's, Dulwich and Lancing. We were delighted to be chosen by The Purcell School as the venue for their Young Musicians Summer showcase and by the

Drakensberg Boys Choir for their evening recital. Later in the year, Chromatica Orchestra hosted a concert on 11th November entitled Music and Readings for Armistice Day. Sir Ben Okri read poetry and Ben Goldscheider was the soloist for Strauss's Horn Concerto No 1.

Graduation ceremonies took place in the Cathedral for the University of Sunderland London Campus and King's College London. The Guild of Architectural Ironmongers held an awards ceremony and Guild lunch in the nave and Mastercard hosted a gala dinner for 150 card holders from its South American territories. We were also the venue for the Society of Authors and Sandford St Martin (religious broadcasting) awards ceremonies.

The London office of Milliman, a global actuarial and consulting firm, held a reception in the nave and Churchyard for 400 guests and the Church Commissioners ran a Cathedral Sustainability Fund Learning Day conference. The US Embassy of London departmental drinks reception was held in November, with 700 guests, for the third year running.

The success of our events is due, in no small measure, to our group of excellent catering partners, who enabled us to exceed the budget target for commission last year. Good work by Cristina Guerrero enabled us to increase revenue from meeting rooms by a healthy 43% to £129K, with repeat bookings from two NHS trusts (Guy's & St. Thomas and Oxleas), E3G (an independent climate change think tank), News UK, King's College London and Convex Insurance. In the last twelve months over 60 separate hirers have used the Cathedral's meeting rooms.

Alfie Roche has continued to refine the operation of the shop, which showed steady growth in sales, up by £29K (16%) to £218K, although the additional £17K of gross profit was offset by a budgeted £18K increase in operating expenses, resulting in a marginal fall in net profit. 2024 was heavy with book events - often 2 a week - which are good for sales, but our 40% margin on books is lower than the 50% we achieve on most other stock lines. We are aiming to improve the availability of sales mix data to allow us to fine tune the profitability of the shop.

The Café, operated by our partners, Comptoir Gourmand, delivered a £16K (32%) increase in licence fees. They have continued to provide a friendly, reliable service and an attractive food offering to the congregation, visitors and staff. We know that balancing the interests, in both menu and pricing terms, of the various stakeholders, including the Cathedral itself, can be tricky for them at times.

The Board of Enterprises is very appreciative of the commitment and sheer hard work of everyone who contributes to the generating of commercial income for the Cathedral. We were delighted by the appointment of Paul Smith as Cathedral COO and we are already benefitting from his previous experience managing the commercial activities of Liverpool Cathedral. We've also appreciated the considerable amount of work that Ted Halshaw and Jonathan Wood have put into improving the financial management of the company.

I would particularly like to thank my fellow non-executive directors, Jessica Kingsley, Grant Tripp (who has again put in a great many voluntary hours in the shop) and Hanif Barma, for the time and expertise that they have contributed over the past year. Following a review of governance, we were very pleased to welcome two new directors, Gill Reynolds, a nominee of Chapter, and Nick Laws to the Board in February 2025.

The impact of the works at Minerva House has, at least so far, not been as harmful to the company's business - and particularly that of the Café - as we initially feared. We appreciate the good relationship that Naomi Shaw has built up with the onsite team of Morrisroe, the construction company.

There has been an encouraging start to 2025 and we are on course to deliver a further increase in the contribution that Enterprises makes to the overall finances of the Cathedral.



Visitor Engagement

Jon Dollin, Head of Visitor Engagement



Our Visitor Engagement (VE) team has expanded this year as we took on several new Welcome Hosts kindly supported by a grant from the Church Sustainability Fund.

In October we hosted Luke Jerram's Gaia which was the centrepiece of our Climate Justice fortnight of events, 23,000 visited the Cathedral during this fortnight and we were delighted to partner with Christian Aid as we highlighted how the climate crisis impacts disproportionately on the Global South.

Visitor figures for 2024 increased by 18% on 2023 which is encouraging and something for the Cathedral to build on in 2025 and onwards with the new strategic plan. At the time of writing visitor figures for 2025 continue to increase month-by-month on previous years.

The visitor engagement team have delivered over 100 diverse events in 2024-2025 including talks, churchyard theatre, concerts, comedy nights and tours welcoming over 15,000 people.

Our programme of talks and events continue to thrive and grow in popularity, the VE team are thankful to our speakers, poets, artists, activists, musicians and artists who have joined us and there are far too many to mention, but we are in awe of their knowledge, passion and their sheer joy in bringing their expertise to the Cathedral. From talks and discussions on historical events, to history of LGBTQ and racial rights and other subjects that are socially unjust to poetry, art and theology and spirituality we look to continue to bring people together at the Cathedral.

Blankets for London

2024 was also the year we brought Blankets for London, and the Big Cathedral Knit to the Cathedral by partnering with not-for-profit company Craft Forward based in Brixton. Over two days, one in August for producing kitted and crocheted squares and in November for assembling blankets over 3,000 people from all different backgrounds, ages and faiths joined us

at the Cathedral to produce over 200 blankets which Craft Forward distributed to several homeless charities in London in early December. Community in action and we look forward to building on this relationship with Craft Forward in 2025.

Tours

We have also welcomed 2,500 people onto our tours throughout the year, these tours play an important role in telling visitors the story of Southwark Cathedral and we are very grateful to our brilliant team of Guides who deliver these.

Exhibitions

Exhibitions in 2024-2025 included a display of icons by acclaimed iconographer Hanna Ward, Threads through Creation a spectacular re-telling of the Creation story in Genesis using twelve huge textile panels and the forementioned Gaia.

We also re-introduced art in the café and will be looking at inviting local artists and charities to display their work throughout 2025 and beyond. In February 2025 we were delighted to be able to display several pieces of artwork depicting icons written on ammunition boxes discarded on the battlefields of Ukraine. Donations and income generated from sales of this beautiful pieces generated over £20,000 for the Ukrainian charity Peli who have used this money to purchase medical supplies for the front line.

With Modern Slavery being the Cathedral's social justice theme for 2025, we have worked closely with several charities who work in this field on ensuring the Cathedral raises awareness of this unseen issue which is hidden in plain sight. At the time of writing visitors can see the Art is Freedom exhibition which is artwork by modern slavery survivors in the Cathedral churchyard, we have also hosted a visitor engagement day in the Cathedral where we were joined by charities and organisation who work with survivors as well as raise awareness locally and nationally. Working alongside the charity Hestia we have also had the pleasure of providing a space for modern slavery survivors to take part in craft workshops as part of their journey to rebuilding their lives.

Worship will always be at the core of the Cathedral's mission and charitable purpose, but as a Cathedral, parish church and place of spiritual focus in the community, we believe that we should be playing our part in bringing different communities together whatever their background or current circumstances. Our VE team play an important part in our mission by welcoming and engaging all, including those who are may be hesitant to come to a Cathedral or church, and by offering education and entertainment in the context of a faith space and heritage church building. The work is also key to the Cathedral's fundraising activities and supports important retail and café income.



Music

Simon Hogan, Acting Director of Music

As readers will know, in the past year the music department suffered a devastating loss – that of Ian Keatley, who was Director of Music at the Cathedral since 2019.

Ian was an inspiring leader to the department, someone who cared passionately about all the musicians in his care, particularly the 40+ choristers for whom Ian's passing came as a particularly huge shock. In November we celebrated all that Ian gave to the Cathedral in a special Evensong, at which the sheer number of attendees reminded us just how well-loved Ian was, not only in the Cathedral community, but by the whole musical world, in London and beyond. Hearing the current choir, joined by former choristers, and our friends in the Merbecke Choir, accompanied by some of the industry's finest brass players and percussionists, will be a sound that will be hard to forget, and surely the finest possible send-off we could have offered!

Despite these sad circumstances, the choirs have remained focused, and have been heard at a number of high-profile events, including a special service for the Cathedral Music Trust, attended by the Trust's Royal Patron, HRH The Duchess of Gloucester, a sold-out carol concert with the Chameleon Arts Orchestra, and the usual liturgies for Holy Week and Easter. In addition, the Lay Clerks have enjoyed performing as soloists in the Tuesday afternoon recital series, and my colleague James Gough continues to dazzle audiences in a variety of evening performances.

As we look forward, we eagerly await the arrival of our new Director, Helen Smee, who begins at the Cathedral in August, and we look forward to celebrating the 25th anniversary of the founding of our wonderful girls' choir, the focus of which will be at a special concert in July. I am also particularly excited to be relaunching the Old Choristers' Association, who last met pre-covid, and who will sing together as part of Evensong later in term.

My thanks go to Canon Kathryn for her calm and assured leadership during this past year, and to all the wonderful musicians I get to work with on a regular basis, including James, Emily, and our fabulous team of Lay Clerks. We are all very much looking forward to Helen's arrival, and to seeing how the next chapter in the life of the music department develops over the coming years!



Cathedral Stewards

Alison Brown, Lead Steward

This year we currently have 41 active Stewards. An important part of their role is to ensure people feel welcome as they enter the Cathedral, whether it is their first visit or are long standing members.

We work closely with the Volunteers' Officer, the Clergy and Vergers and appreciate their support along with other members of the Chapter. We are very pleased to have recruited 7 new Stewards who have joined us during the year, all of whom have become valuable members of the team. The Stewards contribute a minimum of 68 volunteer hours a month and many more during the year especially over Easter and Christmas.

On 19 January the Stewards were rededicated at the 11am Choral Eucharist followed by a social gathering in the library afterwards. This was very much appreciated by all those who attended.

A training session was held on 5 April at which committee members were able to pass on information and help develop good practice. We were very grateful to Paul Timms, the Head Verger, for his contribution regarding evacuation and lockdown procedures.

The Stewards' Committee, which consists of 9 members, has met regularly this year to plan for ways in which the Stewards can contribute to the Vision of the Cathedral.



Volunteers

Sharda Rozena, Volunteers Officer

We are fortunate to have 337 active volunteers at Southwark Cathedral, many of whom offer their time in multiple roles.

This contribution of service is significant and vital to achieve our Cathedral aims and values. Volunteers undertake a wide range of roles based both at the Cathedral and in the local community. Within the Cathedral teams, there are pastoral roles, which include Day Chaplains and Listeners, visitor experience roles like the Welcomers and Guides, as well as operational roles (e.g. Flower Arrangers, Broderers and Money Counters). We also offer opportunities involving the local community, including volunteering with school groups at the Cathedral's Learning Centre and supporting the overnight homeless shelter with Robes. We have recruited 17 new volunteers since the start of 2025 and increased the diversity of our volunteers by recruiting more young people and students, especially in the roles of Youth and

Junior Xpress Leaders and Finance Assistants. We support our volunteers by offering relevant training, including the annual Volunteers Forum where volunteers and staff meet to discuss future projects. We celebrate our volunteers through the Annual Volunteer Party and Thanksgiving Evensong. The Volunteer Officer also organises reciprocal visits for volunteers to foster a sense of community, build strong relationships with other organisations and encourage knowledge sharing; since the start of 2025 we have visited the Golden Hinde, the Migration Museum and Emery Walker's House and we will be meeting with the team at Lambeth Palace later in the summer.

Learning Centre

Emily Harris, Learning Centre Manager



Highlight figures

- ♦ 4747 students per session (compared with 3518 for the same period last year) equating to 4368 primary and 353 secondary students per session
- ♦ Five family learning events in school holidays
- ♦ Four teacher training afternoons for diocesan Early Career Teachers and teachers new to CofE schools
- ♦ Two skills-sharing sessions with the Cathedral learning teams from Westminster Abbey and Guildford Cathedral

After the sudden and unexpected closure of the Learning Centre (Susannah Barford Room) in Autumn 2023 due to structural issues with the ceiling, 2024 brought much change for the Learning team. The flexibility and resilience of our volunteers shone through, and schools continued to be welcomed onsite throughout the period of rectification work. With the support of our excellent Cathedral colleagues, we were able to welcome higher numbers of students to the Cathedral than in 2023 despite substantial accommodation challenges. In spring 2024 we underwent a long-term accommodation change. Primary school visits are now permanently relocated into the old shop space, with secondary school visits hosted in the rectified Susannah Barford Room.

The Learning Centre continued to be managed by one permanent, part-time member of staff supported by a dedicated team of 11 teaching volunteers. In late Autumn 2024 we were delighted to employ a new part-time administrator on a fixed-term contract to support school booking administration two days per week during term time.

Visiting schools continued to be a mix of community and faith schools, predominantly from Inner and Greater London with some travelling further from Surrey and Kent. We have continued to offer free places for Southwark Borough schools with high levels of students eligible for pupil premium though a bursary scheme generously funded by the St Olave's Foundation Trust.

Summer 2024 brought another successful family learning collaboration with our friends at The Southwark Heritage Centre during the 'Threads through Creation' exhibition. Family visitors were invited to explore 'created' objects highlighting Southwark's Maker heritage- from scrimshaw to silk. Younger visitors made silk moth puppets and searched for embroidered minibeasts in the spectacular panels. We also supported the Cathedral's Mudlarking and Crafts bank holiday weekend delivering family puppet-making sessions and welcomed back the Old Operating Theatre to share stories of our shared monastic past through object handling, medicinal herb identification and leaf printing.

With Luke Jerram's 'Gaia' returning to the Cathedral in October, we devised a bespoke programme for visiting schools as part of the Cathedral's Climate Justice fortnight. Children's messages of climate hope, written on seed paper, were displayed at the Cathedral during Gaia and, later, at a national exhibition at the Houses of Parliament as part of the Creative for Climate Justice project in collaboration with Christian Aid. The seed paper messages are being planted out in spring 2025 creating sustainable wildflower beds at front of the Cathedral – watch this space for some bee-friendly blooms.

We culminated 2024 with another successful 'Journey to the Manger' in partnership with the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education. 175 Year 2 students from our diocesan school family enjoyed a celebratory day of storytelling, craft, music and worship to explore the meaning behind the Christmas story.

Funding in 2024 was raised from school visit income along with support from the Cathedral and individual donations. We extend our grateful thanks for the continued support of the generous donors who enable this important engagement work with children and young people.

In 2025 we are focussing on increasing capacity and strengthening our relationship with the Cathedral whilst continuing to resource the centre robustly and sustainably to continue to deliver high-quality Learning Outside the Classroom experiences at the Cathedral.



Teacher feedback

♦ The symbol trail supported the RE curriculum for this term. Both the trail and the puppet making workshop were purposeful, fun and memorable.

♦ The children came away with a clear understanding of the climate issues facing the people of the Solomon Islands and what they can do to make a difference.

♦ The children were able to see the Christian symbols in the Cathedral and had them well explained. They also loved the workshop and having their own candles to bring home.

♦ Excellent for revision and targeted to the key aspects of the specification (e.g. sacraments, reconciliation), really knowledgeable staff and clear explanations of complex ideas

♦ Great team running the workshop. Lots of fun hands-on activities and the staff were very knowledgeable.

♦ We were able to explore the Cathedral, there were examples of practices, references to differences in denominations and an opportunity for students to explore themes.

♦ The session was lovely and the children enjoyed dressing up as Romans and creating their headdress. The staff were friendly and informed and spoke kindly to the children.



Junior and Youth Xpress

Junior Xpress and Youth Xpress

This last year has seen a steady growth in the number of young people joining our weekly Junior Xpress and monthly Youth Xpress sessions.

For the past two years our young people have taken part in the November Robes Sleepout with their own entertainment, followed by the younger members sleeping with their families in the Retrochoir and older members braving the elements outside. They raised a substantial amount of sponsorship, giving Mark, Michael and Hodge a run for their money! During the year we have recruited two new YX leaders and 4 new JX leaders. Our ministry among children and young families continues to be a key priority in our Vision and we will be reviewing our offer and seeking new way of encouraging our young people and developing their life of faith.



18-35s Group

Sharda Rozena

In late 2024 we revitalised the 18-35's group with an introductory social evening at the Dean's house.

Young members of the congregation and the Southwark Cathedral community came together to meet and discuss how they would like to see the group develop and what activities they would be interested in doing. Since this initial meeting, the members of the group have increased in number and have continued to meet at a pub social and quiz night. The group will meet again in the Spring with Michael Rawson to discuss his early involvement in the church, as well as to develop some more ideas for the rest of the year.



Pastoral Services

The following pastoral offices were celebrated during the past twelve months.

- ◇ Funerals 12
- ◇ Weddings 2
- ◇ Baptisms 14
- ◇ Confirmations 7
- ◇ Admission to Holy Communion 7



Electoral Roll

Sarah Mann, Electoral Roll Officer

This year, a new Electoral Roll was completely built from scratch in accordance with the Church Representation Rules 2025.

No-one likes to fill in a form but being on the roll is an important mark of membership and belonging. It is a tribute to the work of the dozen or so volunteer Electoral Roll Champions that, over a period of 5 weeks, they persuaded 362 people to sign up. That represents a fall from the figure recorded at the Annual Meeting in 2024 but matches exactly the figure achieved at the last full revision in 2019 (see table).

	Before Revision	After Revision
2019 Revision	656 (2018 APCM)	362
2025 Revision	476 (2024 APCM)	362

The figures should be seen in the context of the disruption of the pandemic years when the Cathedral was closed for over 6 months during three separate lockdowns. Sampling suggests that about 40% of the people on the 2025 roll are new to it.

The revision of the roll was publicised, as required by the Rules, by formal notices, and by email and by frequent announcements. The revised roll was available for inspection and correction for the statutory period.



Mother's Union

Jill Tilley, Mother's Union Secretary

Southwark Cathedral with St Hughs' Branch is part of a global movement working to develop communities, support family life in all its diversity, advocate for change and build a future where everyone thrives.

Prayers

Midday Prayers, led by branches within the Diocese of Southwark, are held on the 4th Wednesday of the month, except December, in the Harvard Chapel at 11.45am – 12.15pm. All are welcome. The Cathedral with St Hugh's Branch led Midday Prayers on Wednesday 22 May following which a service was held at Mary Sumner House for the first Rise Up (against domestic abuse) Celebration Service. The Southwark Diocese Wave of Prayer was held on 31 August – 2 September. This branch led the prayers on 31 August in the Harvard Chapel during which prayed for dioceses in the UK and around the world.

Diocesan Festival Service

The Annual Diocesan Festival Service was held at Southwark Cathedral on the 8th June. The President and Preacher was The Rt. Revd. Rosemarie Mallett, Bishop of Croydon and the theme of the service was Transformation – Now! During the choral Eucharist on Sunday November 3rd new members were admitted to the Mothers' Union alongside a member being admitted to this branch. The Canterbury Provincial Gathering was held on 22nd June at The Kings Centre in Oxford attended by four of our members. The Southwark Cathedral with St Hughs' Branch celebrated its Tenth Anniversary on Sunday 30 March and members were able to recommit themselves to each other and the vision of the Mothers' Union.

Members continue to support the tea@2 sessions and the ongoing knitting for babies admitted to the Neonatal Unit at the Evelina Children's Hospital. The branch supported the annual 16 days (25 November – 10 December) of activism against gender-based violence, 'A Place for Them', and an empty Red Chair was put on display in the Cathedral symbolising those who have died as a result of gender-based violence and abuse. A Cake Sale was held by the Mothers' Union on 30 March, Mothering Sunday. The monies raised will be donated to the Twinning Project for use in Zimbabwe.



Streaming Team

Tony Piper

In 2024, the Streaming Team streamed 78 services. In addition to the regular schedule of the 11am Eucharist and monthly Compline and Benediction, we streamed an additional services during Holy Week, a Meditation with Organ Music for Corpus Christi, the Ordination of Deacons, the Advent Procession, the Longest Night Service, and the Cathedral Carol Service.

The team also streamed Ian Keatley's memorial service which accounted for 3.2% of our total watch hours.

The Vergers also streamed Morning Prayer daily throughout the year.

Our combined output was 373 services and events, totalling 246 hours of streamed content across YouTube, Facebook, and the Cathedral's website.

Typically, Morning Prayer is attended in real-time by approximately 60 people across YouTube, Facebook, and the Cathedral's website, and around 100 people attend the 11am Sunday Eucharist online. Additionally, many more watch on catch-up during the week.

Detailed YouTube analytics

Facebook provides limited statistics, but here are the YouTube numbers:

♦ **2,607** subscribers (versus 2,198 in 2023)

♦ **14,586** hours watched (compared to 17,339 in 2023). *The 2023 figures included a 2,905-hour spike from Bishop Karowei's funeral services, meaning watch time has remained steady overall.*

Viewer demographics

♦ 63.4% (63.8% in 2023) of viewers were in the UK and 10.7% (8.8% in 2023) were in the USA.

♦ London residents accounted for 15.7% (19.6% in 2023) of total watch time.

♦ Many viewers have long-standing ties to the Cathedral but are unable to attend due to ill health or relocation.

Team Contribution

The team consisted of four members (Tony, Maggie, Guy, and Sharon) who collectively volunteered 470 hours. In late December, Lynne joined the team. I (Tony) would like to express my gratitude to the team for their dedication, hard work, and enthusiasm.

Technical Highlights and Plans

Thanks to a generous donation from a member of the congregation, we doubled the cameras, increasing from two to four.

We also installed a new video mixer, enabling:

♦ Better coverage of the choir.

♦ Streaming from anywhere in the Cathedral, including the High Altar and Retrochoir, opening up possibilities for more engaging online-friendly liturgies.

♦ Recording and re-editing services, which has been especially useful for memorials and carol services.

Currently, all four cameras are temporarily installed, requiring cables and mats to be laid and removed for every service. This has significantly increased the setup workload.

Plans for Summer 2025 are underway to install permanent cables, subject to funding and approval. We also aim to establish a streaming desk at the back of the North Transept, allowing the team to work seated.

We are always striving to enhance the quality and accessibility of our live-streaming and value your feedback - not only on ways we can improve but also on how it has positively impacted you.

The Friends of Southwark Cathedral

Kate Dean, Director

The Friends had another varied and busy year in 2024. There were numerous opportunities for members to meet together with illustrated lectures, our annual quiz, social gatherings and special services and our continuing programme of pilgrimages.

In April a group of Friends visited Dresden for a long weekend continuing our theme of 'reconciliation'. During the weekend the group enjoyed a tour of the Frauenkirche and also attended a Sunday morning service.

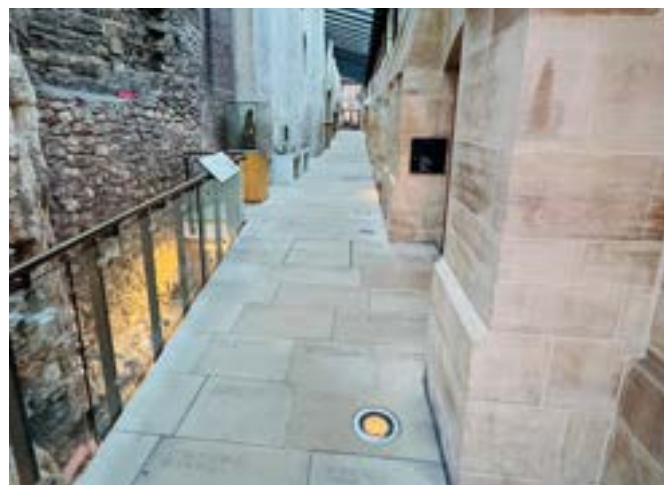


Requests for funding

The Trustees met four times during the year and were pleased to receive a range of requests for funding from the Cathedral. In the financial year the Friends funded the Easter and Christmas flowers as well as the Easter eggs for the congregation. We continued with our regular commitment paying for the ongoing costs of the volunteer management system and donations database. Bigger projects funded by the Friends Foundation Fund included the specialist cleaning of Lancelot's Link and the archaeology chamber together with the first stage of the conservation of the Lancelot Andrewes book collection. A total of nearly £20,000 was given in grants to the Cathedral last year.



All our events were open to all, ensuring continued public benefit of our organisation. It has been valuable to have the opportunity to illustrate the work of the Friends throughout the Cathedral and in doing so we have been able to invite visitors to join the Friends thereby giving an ongoing commitment to the Cathedral.



Unity Group

Frances Hiller, Chair

‘Christian unity is not uniformity, but harmony’

Pope Francis

The Cathedral Unity Group, which is an informally constituted group responsible to, and reporting to, Chapter under the auspices of the Sub-Dean, is responsible for ecumenical outreach. It organises and encourages participation in ecumenical activities locally, nationally and internationally. The Group has met formally on six occasions during the past year. It also met informally in March to review its purpose and future development.

Unity Forum

This group brings together members of Southwark Cathedral, St George’s Cathedral and St Olav’s Norwegian Church. A very well attended meeting was held at St George’s Cathedral in February, with refreshments followed by a fruitful discussion. Many lay people were present. Unfortunately, no members of the Norwegian Church were able to be present. The priest, the Revd Dag Magnus Hopstock Havgar, has recently returned to Norway. It is hoped to reinvigorate the relationship with St Olav’s when the new priest is in place.

Robes Project

Reports are received at each meeting from volunteers with the Project who are also members of the Unity Group. Members took part in the annual SleepOut, and Southwark Cathedral provided volunteers for the Night Shelter at Christ Church, Blackfriars. The problem of homelessness continues to grow, exacerbated by the economic situation.



Cross of Nails

Southwark Cathedral has been a member of the ecumenical Community of the Cross of Nails since 2020, and sees responding to injustice through prayer and action as central to its mission. In this context the Cathedral is currently working in partnership with a number of organisations involved in the prevention of Modern Slavery, in line with our Vision. The CCN Litany of Reconciliation is prayed in the Cathedral every Friday at Morning Prayer and at noon. Bergen Cathedral is also a member of CCN.

Southbank Churches

Canon Michael Rawson has continued to represent us at meetings of this group, which includes representatives of local Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Anglican and Baptist churches. Various events have taken place, including the Ecumenical Good Friday Walk of Witness, bringing together Christians from these churches, including Southwark Cathedral, and finishing with a short service at Waterloo Station.

International Ecumenical Activity

Rouen and Bergen

Individual personal friendships have helped to maintain the relationships with our link Cathedrals in Bergen and Rouen throughout the past year. A group from Southwark Cathedral visited Bergen in September and experienced the warm hospitality of our friends at Bergen Cathedral. A return visit is currently taking place.

A group from Rouen Cathedral visited in October, taking part in a varied and interesting programme. Our guests, together with some members of the Unity Group, were able to attend the Saturday evening Mass at St George’s Cathedral. A return visit is being planned for September. We continue to participate together regularly in online Lectio Divina sessions, as well as meeting online to share news. There is a very active WhatsApp group.

Pope Francis’ approach to ecumenism was shaped as “walking together, praying together and working together”. This is the journey that we undertake together, and friendship lies at the very heart of this work.

The Bellringers

Rachel Swarder

The Southwark Cathedral Society of Bell Ringers had another successful year in 2024-25, starting with a visit to Birmingham where the band were lucky to ring at Birmingham Cathedral as well as St Martin's in the Bullring which has 16 bells!

We also enjoyed a weekend away to Exeter in September where some of the group were able to test themselves on the tenor at Exeter Cathedral, the second heaviest ring of bells in the world.

Our usual summer lunch and annual dinner were well attended, bolstered by increased attendance on Wednesday evening practices and on Sunday mornings. We were the only tower to enter two bands into the London Twelve Bell Striking Competition in October, coming 6th and 9th, and our band for the National Twelve Bell Striking Contest qualifier in Rotherham in March came a very respectable 4th.

We have enjoyed supporting the Cathedral community by ringing for a number of special services and weddings over the year, and continue to practice hard to deliver the best quality ringing possible on a Sunday morning.



St Hugh's Church

The Reverend Delorine Green, Interim Minister-in-Charge

St Hugh's is the 'Parish Church' for the Conventional District, a small area in the South West corner, of the Cathedral Parish.

St Hugh's Parish is ethnically very diverse, with a large number of second and third generation people of West African origin. The area is largely Christian in faith. This diversity is reflected in the congregation. There were 62 names on the electoral roll at St Hugh's last APCM (2024).

Mother Delorine was welcomed as interim Minister-in-Charge in March 2025, her predecessor, Father Thomas Sharp, having moved on in February 2025. We are grateful to Father Alun who continues to preside once a month and we enjoy welcoming members of the Cathedral team and other local clergy who join us from time to time.

In addition to our weekly Sunday morning Parish Mass, special services are also held on main Feast days around Christmas and Holy Week. St Hugh's is also licensed for marriages. A typical Parish Eucharist will see around 35 worshippers, with about a quarter being under the age of sixteen. A Thursday evening Bible Study Group has been established in the past year and is open to all.

Highlights

- ♦ **April 2025** – Our regular Easter visit to Guy's Hospital to distribute Easter Eggs to patients and staff
- ♦ **March 2025** – 3 members of the congregation attended the Area Lay Conference
- ♦ **August – October 2024** – Guest preacher summer programme. 5 sermons, in person and online, from across the Anglican Communion
- ♦ **July 2024** – Parish Retreat to Hilfield Priory, Dorset

Annual Accounts

The latest annual accounts are being audited at the time of writing but we expect St Hugh's run a small surplus of just over £2,000 for 2024. Lettings income from the popular community space, the Rainbow Room, continues to recover and the generosity of our congregation is important to us. St Hugh's was able to continue to decrease its

reliance on subsidy from the Diocese and has made a further significant increase (£6,000/30%) to its Parish Share for 2025.

St Hugh's is grateful for all the ministerial and vital operational support it receives from the Cathedral while remaining proudly independent, with its own distinctive character, energy and context.



The Cathedral School

Filiz Scott, Headteacher

Here at the Cathedral Primary School we are proud of our Church of England ethos and strong link to Southwark Cathedral.

We recently installed a prominent new sign on the side of our building. This sign, measuring 3.5 metres wide, features a beautiful photograph of Southwark Cathedral, the school badge featuring our motto, "Life in all its fullness" (John 10:10), along with our core values, referred to as the 'Fruits of Friendship with God.'

We are deeply rooted in the nine Fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We believe that every child is unique, developing at their own pace. Our mission is to provide an environment where each child can flourish. We encourage children to work, learn, and play in a manner that reflects these values, fostering both individual growth and a caring community.

Our school values are highlighted in our collective worship and integrated throughout the curriculum. We describe these values as God in action, encouraging children to embody these fruits in their daily lives. For more information, please visit our website, where we have dedicated a page to our values, including definitions, relevant Bible quotes, and prayers.

Collective worship is a vital and joyful part of the school day, taking place every morning and attended by all children from Reception to Year 6. This fosters a sense of unity and belonging. One of the many advantages of being a one-form entry school is that all children can fit comfortably in the hall, ensuring everyone participates in worship. Every act of worship begins with a hymn, with children singing to a high standard, sometimes performing descants and harmonies. We conclude with a prayer related to the theme and The Lord's Prayer.

Our sessions vary throughout the week, featuring contributions from senior staff, teachers, classes, and clergy from the Cathedral. Parents are invited to attend class collective worship, where children showcase their learning making these occasions extremely special. Year 6 pupils lead Celebration Assembly, providing opportunities to develop confidence, leadership, and public speaking skills. On Thursdays, a member of the clergy from the Cathedral leads our worship, sharing themes such as Old Testament stories and deepening the children's understanding of faith.

Our connection with Southwark Cathedral is strengthened through visits to the Education Centre and school services which happen six times a year – as a result the Cathedral has become a home away from home for our children. Several pupils are proud members of the Cathedral choirs, and we are fortunate to have teachers with ties to the Cathedral, including one who was a former chorister.

Our Governing Body includes several governors linked to Southwark Cathedral, including Father Michael, our vice-chair. Each meeting begins with a prayer, reminding governors of our motto and school values. We are immensely grateful to be part of such a vibrant community and work hard to uphold the values that connect us to Southwark Cathedral. Thank you all for your continued support.



St Olave's Grammar School

Andrew Rees, Headteacher

It has been another busy and successful year at St Olave's Grammar School. We are pleased that our relationship with Southwark Cathedral remains so strong.

Our Annual Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving took place last May in the splendid setting of the Cathedral. The Reverend Justin White, Senior Provost, Woodard Schools, gave an inspiring address to a packed cathedral of guests, including the Mayor of Bromley, governors, students, staff, parents, and Old Olavians. The outgoing Senior Prefect Team and members of staff read the traditional verses before the whole Cathedral resounded to the final hymn, 'Jerusalem'.

As a school, we are committed to making a significant contribution to the common good of the local community. During Festival in December, the school raised money for Bromley Homeless, a local charity that provides a wide range of housing, psychological, and benefit support to the homeless and those at risk. They run their own emergency overnight shelter during the winter, and over January and February, six groups of sixth form students and teachers volunteered at the shelter on Saturday mornings. A group of sixth form students and staff also took part in a Sleep Out, where they slept outside our sixth form block on cardboard boxes to raise money for the charity. Although it seemed fairly warm at first, the temperature felt like it plummeted during the night, which, when combined with patches of light rain, made the conditions quite unpleasant. It helped the students appreciate how difficult it must be for all those who have to do this every night!

There were a number of highlights from our recent SIAMS report, which confirms St Olave's Grammar School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. The report has the following notable strengths:

- ◇ The inspirational Christian vision of this school is life-affirming.
- ◇ Collective worship is a valued and impactful experience for the school.
- ◇ Pupils have a strong sense of justice and feel responsible for each other.
- ◇ The school is joyful and harmonious.

We are proud of the positive impact our school has on students, staff, and the wider community. The SIAMS report reaffirms our commitment to our Christian vision and values, and we look forward to continuing to provide a safe space for each member of the community to live well together.



Robes Winter Night Shelter

We hosted guests at the shelter on Friday nights from the beginning of January until Friday 28 March.

Dan, Ross and Neil, the Team Leaders, would like to say a big thank you to the volunteers for their time, commitment and desire to make a difference in a practical way, demonstrating kindness and hospitality. A huge thank you from the guests and volunteers staffing the Robes Shelter at Christchurch, Blackfriars for your very generous donations of clothing and toiletries.

Robes is a key part of delivering the Cathedral's strategic vision. We make space for our guests to pause and take stock and give a hand with the very practical support of food, showers and a warm place to sleep. With these basic human needs met our guests can begin to focus on moving forward and moving away from a life on the streets.



Stay in Touch

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read has helped you find out more
about our life and work. Please do
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channels.*

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Newsletter

We send out a weekly round up of What's On at the Cathedral, including the latest news from our Cathedral community.

You can sign up to hear from us on our website.

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