



St Swithun's  
ANGLICAN CHURCH  
PYMBLE

# 2025 Annual Report

Reporting on the Finances and Ministry of 2024



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## Parish Council Meetings Attendance Record

Meetings held since 2024 AGM = 11

<b>Name</b>	<b>Attended</b>
Stuart Holman	9
Ross Millar ( <i>Chair</i> )	10
Andy Bell ( <i>Joined from Jan 25</i> )	2
Rob Clarke	8
Peter Copleston	9
David Green	11
Leighton Hunziker	7
Margaret Knuckey	7
Jenny Liu	10
David Milling ( <i>Bookkeeper</i> )	10
Colin Morrow	7
James Pomeroy	7
Joanne Trevitt	10
Brett Winton ( <i>Treasurer</i> )	10
Mike Yelf	7

# Senior Minister's Report

As we look back over 2024, I am filled with gratitude for the way God has been at work among us at St Swithun's. We are a living community which thrives on the volunteer service of so many people. A sincere thank you to all who have served on rosters, welcomed and loved new members, worked behind the scenes and given of your time. Our shared commitment to welcoming, nurturing, and serving has continued to bear fruit, and I am delighted to highlight some of the strategic successes of the past year in report which follows.

## **1. A Thriving Belonging Ministry System**

Our Belonging Ministry System is now operating effectively, ensuring that every person who comes through our doors has a clear pathway into the life of our church. We have developed systems that allow us to sensitively track attendance, helping us to follow up with new people and provide pastoral care to those who might otherwise 'fall through the cracks.'

Additionally, activities such as shared lunches, combined morning teas, and generous hospitality have fostered a deeper sense of belonging and strengthened our identity as a loving Christian community. This system has been instrumental in making our church a place where people truly feel at home.

## **2. A Well-Established Sunday Service Structure**

Our Sunday Services structure is now well established and operating successfully. While the timing and interaction of our morning services reflect a degree of compromise (if only all our services could commence at 10am!), this arrangement has allowed both services to thrive.

- The 9am Traditional Service remains strong, with new members coming in to replace those who, due to changing circumstances, have transitioned to our online congregation.
- The 10:30am Contemporary Service continues to grow steadily, serving families of all ages well. Our children's and youth ministries continue operate through this service.
- The 6pm Night Church has also seen steady growth, with a mix of younger and older members forming a vibrant and welcoming community. The development of our music ministry in this service has been particularly pleasing.

## **3. Strength in Pastoral Care and Maturity**

With the ongoing strength of our Pastoral Care and Maturity Ministry Systems, we are now in an excellent position to reach out to our surrounding community with confidence. Our invitation to others is underpinned by the knowledge that those who join us will have an effective and welcoming pathway into belonging and discipleship.

#### 4. A United and Effective Staff Team

Our staff team is now well-established and united in their pursuit of a shared model of ministry. My sincere thanks to each one: it is a pleasure to serve alongside such fine women and men. With clear priorities and strong collaboration, we continue to build on a solid foundation, ensuring that all aspects of church life are well-supported. I want to express my deep appreciation for each of our ministry leaders and staff, whose dedication and servant-hearted leadership are shaping the life of our church in profound ways.

	Title	Role	2024 (days/week)	2024 FTE
Stuart Holman	Senior Minister	Maturity and 6pm	6 days	F/T 1.0
Andy Bell	Assistant Minister	Belonging and 10:30am	6 days	F/T 1.0
Nigel Gray	Assistant Pastor	Outreach and 9am	4 days	P/T 0.8
Hannah Killen	Children's and Youth Minister	Children and Youth	5 days	F/T 1.0
Christina Hollister	Seniors' Minister	Pastoral Care	3 days	P/T 0.6
Emilia Oslington	Youth Worker	Youth	2 days*	P/T 0.4
Joshua Young	Youth Worker	Youth	2 days^	P/T 0.4
Jean Gurusamy	Parish Administrator	Administration and P.A.	32 hours	
Dineesha Welikala	Administration Assistant	Administration	20 hours	
Phil Linqvist	Musical Director (Traditional)	Choir	1 day	
Peter Hamilton	Organist	Choir	sessional	

\*on maternity leave from September 2024.

^from March 2024, supported by the SCGAMT

#### 5. Strong Governance and Financial Stewardship

Careful governance and financial stewardship continue to be hallmarks of St Swithun's. Our Parish Council and Wardens have provided wise oversight, thoughtful planning, and a willingness to trust God for our future. Special thanks go to our Wardens:

- Ross Millar (Senior Minister's Warden),
- David Green and Margaret Knuckey (elected Wardens),
- As well as the members of Parish Council for their diligence and faithfulness.

A sincere thank you to Brett Winton (Treasurer) and David Milling, whom we continue to believe is the most over-qualified Bookkeeper in the world! Their attention to detail and commitment to financial transparency ensure that we steward our resources well.

### **Tracking Our Ministry Goals**

As in previous years, an Appendix to this document records our specific ministry goals for 2024, with progress categorized as follows:

1. Goal achieved
2. Goal partly achieved, work ongoing
3. Goal attempted but not achieved, under review
4. No progress made on this goal

This ongoing review helps us remain accountable to the 2024-2028 Ministry Plan and responsive to the evolving needs of our church and community.

### **Conclusion**

As we look to the future, I am filled with hope and expectation for what God will continue to do in and through St Swithun's. We are in a strong and healthy position to welcome others into our community, to deepen our faith together, and to continue serving with joy. Thank you to each one of you for your prayers, service, generosity, and faithfulness as we continue on this journey together.

With gratitude and joy,  
Rev. Stuart Holman  
*Senior Minister*



## Wardens' Report

The current sermon series on loving our neighbours provides very useful context for this report, for the year saw St Swithun's thinking greatly about how to be better neighbours in our community.

Stuart and his Ministry Team have guided the Parish through the Ministry Plan for 2024. Stuart discusses the Plan, its results and the Ministry Plan for 2025 more fully in his report, but we are delighted that Swiz is now positioned to reach out more deliberately into the Pymble community (and other communities nearby) as part of this commitment to being better neighbours.

With the retirement as a Warden of Peter Copleston at the last AGM (and we thank Peter again for his continuing commitment as a member of the Parish Council), David Green was elected as a Warden and has contributed to several significant projects. Meanwhile Margaret Knuckey continues to work tirelessly in the role of Property Warden and her report appears elsewhere in this document.

A great deal of focus this year (from the Wardens, from Parish Council and from Stuart) has been on the redevelopment of the house at 4 Merrivale Road. Renovation had been needed for many years, but it was only with the coincidence of the very generous donation establishing the Swiz Christian Growth and Maturity Trust and Nigel's wish to relocate that we were able to do this, as piecemeal repairs had been largely ineffective. Some \$200,000 (from both parish funds and the Trust) has been spent on a thorough renovation and, at the time of writing, prospective tenants are about to view the property. Renting the property for a year will recoup some of this expense whilst enabling careful consideration of how the property fits into the Ministry Plan for 2026 and beyond.

The Growth Trust has also supported several other initiatives which focus on the expansion of Swiz offerings into our community, including the employment of Joshua Young as a Youth Worker.

As always, your Wardens are immensely grateful for the dedicated work of the Parish Council and of the multitude of volunteers who enable just about every activity of the Parish.

The Parish has been splendidly served again by our Treasurer, Brett Winton, and Bookkeeper, David Milling.

In carrying out our legal responsibilities for finance, for health and safety and for employment (of non-ordained staff), we have been blessed with marvellous cooperation of Stuart and his entire staff team – not all parishes have experienced such harmonious collaboration.

Our gratitude, of course, goes to the members of the Parish for ongoing financial support without which the Parish would not be able to offer the activities it does and without which we would not be able to plan for the future with any confidence.

Most of all, our gratitude is to our Lord for all He has given every one of us at St Swithun's and in our world.

Ross Millar  
*Senior Minister's Warden*





## Property, Grounds and Facilities Report

General maintenance has taken place across all properties, including the cleaning of gutters, and the cleaning of windows inside and out. Stomp Landscapes regularly maintain the grounds of the Church and the PACE Centre, including mowing the lawns, top dressing when needed, pruning the hedges, shrubs and trees in both properties. Thank you to everyone who attended the Working Bee in May at the church and the PACE Centre.

Thank you, to those volunteers who have completed small tasks, as a result of signing up for maintenance on Sign Up Sunday. Your help is appreciated.



The Church from Telegraph Rd with new notice board frame



Courtyard showing cleaned tiles and pruned shrub

### **Church Building**

Maintenance of the church building has continued during the year to ensure that the fabric of the building is in good repair.

Gutters guards were fitted at the back of the church and a new flashing installed over the electrical circuit box to prevent ingress of water. Blocked drains have been cleaned and there has been regular maintenance of the ladies and men's toilets with the installation of an additional shelf in the men's toilets. The interior church light globes have been replaced when necessary and the outdoor carriage lights have been repaired. During February - March 2025 the electricians will test and tag the electrical outlets in the church to ensure continued safety of personnel and visitors in church. Loose and broken slates were replaced by Slate Roofing NSW, who also checked the roof after the severe storm in January when water came into the church. I am happy to report that there are no broken tiles and the roof is intact.

The cupboard in the Upper Room was tidied and old organ pipes were removed (and sold for church funds) this provide more storage room for the Choir gowns. Grainy, black dust was found in the choir stalls and after some intensive investigations with concerns that termites were in the church, ants were

discovered and Iconic Pest Solutions treated the whole church inside and out. We gained our Fire Certificate in May 2024. Thank you to Jean Gurusamy for her contribution to this important aspect of fire safety.



I extend our thanks to those parishioners donated new Red Robin Photina shrubs were planted in the church hedge on Telegraph Road and Merrivale Road adjacent to the Street Library. Thank you to those who watered the hedges. Volunteers repaired the fencing on Merrivale Road.

### **Church Hall**

During 2024 the Church Hall lights have been upgraded, and the windows and dormer windows have been cleaned these jobs have made a huge difference to the brightness and cleanliness of the Church Hall.



### **The PACE Centre**

In the Ridley Smith Room sockets have been replaced and the donation of a new lectern has been appreciated. Sewer repairs have taken place in the back garden. In the upstairs staff kitchen, the damaged hob was removed and a wooden counter top inserted. The fridge door has been repaired. The fence in the back garden was repaired and the fittings for the pedestrian gate has been relocated to the vehicle access gates, this has been done to solve the trip hazard which was in front of the pedestrian gate and located over a storm drain. The side door into the Ridley Smith Room has been made safe and is awaiting further repairs.

### **The Rectory - 11 Merrivale Road, Pymble**

Following my inspection of the Rectory in April 2024, several issues were identified, we have worked steadily through these issues during the year; replacing the cooking hob, repairing the decking, installing new wardrobes in the master bedroom, installing more useful bookshelves in the study (we took advantage of Ikea sales to reduce the cost of these shelves). New black out blinds were installed in the children's bedrooms.

A new air conditioning unit was installed after several attempts to improve the air conditioning. It is good to report that this is working well. A new manhole cover will be in place in March. The fly screens still need repairing and sarking needs to be installed in the cubby hole on the second landing. Andy and Stuart Szeto have worked together to prune shrubs and hedges.

### No 4 Merrivale Road

By far the costliest project was the refurbishment of No 4 Merrivale Road. Following my inspection in March several issues were identified. The roof leaked during a severe storm in late March 2024 and bare wiring was discovered by an electrician when repairing the hall light. In July 2024 Nigel and Dee moved to their new home. From August 2024 to February 2025 the house has been refurbished to include, a new roof, a complete electrical refit including new lights, external and internal painting. New carpets were fitted in the bedrooms and stairs. Windows and fly screens were repaired and new blinds have been fitted in every room, although we are still waiting for a blind to be fitted in the front room.



Before: Tiled roof



After: Colorbond roof and external painting

The kitchen refurbishment includes :- new cupboard doors, kick boards, a new larder cupboard, a new hob, new oven, new extractor fan, newly tiled splash backs, and flooring to match the parquet flooring in the family room. The creation of a laundry in the ground floor shower and toilet room includes:- a tub sink, new worktop over a washer and dryer with an extractor fan.



Completed new kitchen



Newly created indoor laundry

The door from the front room was sealed to give more room in the laundry. Outside is a higher privacy fence and a washing line. A higher balustrade has been added to the balcony. Stomp Landscapes have tidied up the lawns, hedges and shrubs.

We have much to give thanks to God for during this past year, for the provision of monetary funds, for competent and honest workmen, for safety on the site of no 4 in all aspects of work. Thank you to Mike Israel, the Project Manager from August to December, for all his work. Unfortunately, Mike had an accident in October, breaking his collar bone. He is now almost fully recovered, and I wish him well in his new endeavours. Thanks, are also extended to Scott McCredie, electrician, carpenter and Project Manager from December to February, and to John Anderson for his work with Scott. Number 4 is now ready to rent commercially so that we can reimburse the budget from the rental charges.

Thank you to Leighton Hunziker for his support and the many practical ways he contributes to the properties of our church.

Margaret Knuckey  
*Property Warden*



Big thanks to all who came and helped during the Working Bee in May.

## 9am Service

Our 9am Traditional Service is now well settled into a pattern of Morning Prayer (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays) and Holy Communion (2nd and 4th Sundays). Using An Australian Prayer Book (1978) and occasional use of Sunday Services (2001), we have a solid liturgical foundation for our worship. Our choir, also, provides excellent direction, encouragement and creativity as they lead our hymns and stir us with their anthems; all connected thematically to our sermon message for the week.

I am very grateful for so many who serve us in diverse roles each week—welcoming, reading, praying, leading, making morning tea, arranging flowers, polishing brass, running sound and livestream—and other roles besides. A heartfelt ‘thank you’ to all who serve as part of this congregation. I would particularly like to acknowledge the wonderful work of Phil Linquist (our Choir Director), Peter Hamilton (our Organist) and Chris Hollister (who does everything else!). I am also grateful to Nigel Gray who worked pastorally among our 9am congregation during 2024.



Throughout the year there was some innovations and developments in our service, including more variety in the liturgy and musical selections, profile segments highlighting the outreach initiatives of our members, as well as two combined Morning Teas. New volunteers also took up roles as bible readers, tech operators, service leaders, and welcomers. We also had a couple of ‘retirements’ from such roles by those allowing other younger members to step in and take their place. I expect this kind of renewal will continue in 2025.

Our weekly livestream audience has continued to grow to the point where we now consider this as a ‘congregation’ all of its own, with unique needs, concerns and missional opportunities. On average, we have approximately 130 screens viewing our service each week. While some screens represent more than one viewer, others will not follow the entire service. We might estimate, therefore, an additional 130 ‘unseen’ participants in our service each week—more people than are present in the building!

Our challenge for 2025 will surely be building effective pastoral relationships and a sense of belonging for this ‘online’ congregation. When you see our tech-team working feverishly pressing buttons at the back of the church each Sunday (or just drinking coffee!), you might remember to pray for this ‘unseen’ congregation. You might also remember that the tech-team would prefer to chat over morning tea since the most stressful part of their roles is getting everything working before the service starts! Special thanks to Ross Millar, James Allington, Christy Green and Rob Cartwright.

Throughout the year our attendance has remained strong and consistent, averaging 101 each week. Sadly, we farewelled some cherished members in 2024. We have also been delighted to welcome several new members and see them enfolded into our fellowship.

Rev. Stuart Holman  
*Senior Minister*



9:00am morning tea at PACE Centre

## St Swithun's Choir

In Summary - Singing and Serving at:

- Sunday services (46).
- Helping lead the singing at a wedding and funeral services.
- Four St Swithun's Evensongs
- Swiz Messiah (11th)
- Good Friday Service of Word and Song and Easter Day Choral Service
- Leading the annual Huguenots Service at St Swithun's Church
- Our third "Celebrating the Psalms" festival at St Swithun's
- Swiz Foundation Concert (our 10th)
- St Swithun's Christmas Lessons and Carols
- St Swithun's Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning Choral services.

### **CHOIR HIGHLIGHTS:**

#### **Evensongs at St Swithun's and St James King St Sydney**

Last year we sang an Evensong Services for Lent, in May we sang an Evensong for Ascension, in September we sang an Evensong with the theme of "Our Church" and we finished the year singing an Evensong for the beginning of Advent. Thank you to all those who attend and support these traditional choral services and thank you to those members of St Swithun's who helped with refreshments at each of these as it provides such a wonderful time of fellowship.

In September we were welcomed once again to sing an Evensong in St James King St, Sydney. It is a wonderful experience for us to sing Evensong in such a historically significant building with magnificent acoustics and new organ in the heart of our city.



## **Swiz Messiah**

Our 11th Presentation of Handel’s “Messiah” was held on the Saturday evening preceding Palm Sunday. The Swiz Choir was again augmented by friends, family and members of the congregation who enthusiastically joined in rehearsals and the performance. This is a unique presentation of “Messiah” with our Senior Minister Stuart introducing and explaining the bible verses from which it is taken. Thank you to Richard Kaan for preparing the presenter’s script and programs.

This presentation of “Messiah” each year is a wonderful opportunity to tell the story of Jesus in both word and song to our whole community. Thank you for the enormous amount of work Peter Hamilton does to accompany such a massive work and trumpeters Andrew Del Riccio and Raphael Harvey who again added a wonderful spark to the presentation.

## **Celebrating the Psalms**

This has now become an important addition to our choir year. Having been such a great success in 2022 and 2023 Peter Hamilton put together another wonderful program of Psalms for us to Celebrate. Senior Minister Stuart again lead the proceedings and we had a great time singing and sharing, congregational hymns, presenting choral anthems, spoken responsories, chanted psalms and readings. Even an “AI” (Artificial Intelligence) generated essay on the importance and relevance of Psalms today.

## **Foundation Gala Concert**

### **This was our 10th Choral Concert since 2012**

These concerts have given us the chance to challenge and extend our musical and choral experiences beyond our regular choir work.

This year we Presented Joseph Haydn’s Mass in D minor, known as the Nelson Mass and highlights from Felix Mendelssohn’s Elijah oratorio. We had outstanding Soloists join us for both works with Amelia Linqvist – Soprano, Nicole Smeulders – Alto, Simon Gilkes -Tenor and Ben Caukwell – Bass.





Peter Gilkes conducted the Nelson Mass as well as a small instrumental group which comprised Julie Batty and Rob Nijs playing Violin, Freyja Meany, Viola, Sarah Jameson, Cello, Andy del Riccio, Trumpet and Peter Hamilton organ continuo.

Phillip Linqvist Conducted the excerpts from Mendelssohn's Elijah again with our vocal soloists and Peter Hamilton providing Organ accompaniment.

Our Senior Minister Stuart linked the various musical items through his narration to build the story of Elija in this oratorio.

Special thanks to the incredible effort made by Peter Gilkes in his teaching of both notes and Latin pronunciation, for The Nelson Mass, over many months and extra rehearsals and to Peter Hamilton for the mammoth task of accompanying these works. Thanks also to those singers from Willoughby Singers who again joined with us.

Thank you to our ever dependable volunteers who welcomed, ushered, served behind and in front of the counter in the hall afterwards, who helped make the evening a memorable event.

### **Advent Services**

It was great to start Advent this year with an Advent Evensong.

A small group of choristers helped Chris Hollister at the Gordon Quarter (Anglican Retirement Village), lead their Lessons and Carols service.

### **Christmas Services**

Lessons and Carols service was as always, a very special service with six congregational Hymns, four Choral Anthems, seven beautifully read lessons and an encouraging Sermon from our Assistant Minister Andy Bell.

We were blessed this year to have a wonderful number of choristers to help celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour at our 10pm Christmas Eve service and our 9am Christmas Day Communion Service with approx. 30 choristers for each service.

### **Thank You**

My thanks to our Senior Minister Rev Stuart Holman and the whole clergy team for their constant and active support of this "word through music" ministry. Thanks also to Jean and Dineesha for their cheerful office and admin support.

Special thanks to our wardens for their wonderful support and encouragement.

Sadly we farewelled our friend, long, long time chorister and our Patron, Allin Cousens this year. We especially learnt and sang (Thanks to Allin's Daughter Dale) the traditional Māori Farewell (Po Atarau) with the English words "Search Me, O God" and Māori words. Our love and prayers are with Annette and the whole Cousens family

My thanks also to:

- Our organist Peter Hamilton for his incredible musical contribution, compositions and support.
- Peter Gilkes for always being ready to step in to direct the choir as well as his teaching and Directing the Nelson Mass
- Richard Kaan our Cantor, Evensong leader, Verger and logistics organizer.
- Wendy and Brian Watson, our amazing Librarians.
- Brian Watson for his monthly compilation of “Hyfrydol” our choir newsletter which is now published on the Swiz Website
- Pamela Summers for office support especially providing the text of our Anthems every week for the Service outline.
- Lois Fortescue, our mistress of robes.
- Jenny Kaan our social and pastoral director.
- Sue Barling for organizing our monthly collection for St Andrew’s Hyderabad in India
- All our Swiz Singers who joined us for our Swiz “Messiah”
- To Chris Hollister and David Barling, for their welcoming and front of house efforts for all our Evensongs and Concerts.
- The wonderful volunteers that serve refreshments for our Evensongs.



Thank you to our Swiz chorister for continuing to learn and grow with all challenging music and musical styles they are asked to master. It is only through the efforts of every chorister to giving of themselves and serving our Lord and our Church that combine to make our “Choir”.

Our Mission as the “Choir of St Swithun’s Church Pymble” is to serve God and our St Swithun’s family faithfully, so my report finishes with the final portion of the chorister’s prayer that we pray at the close of every rehearsal.

(from the “Choristers Prayer”)

*“Grant that what we sing with our lips, we may believe in our hearts, and what we believe in our hearts, we may show forth in our lives.”*

Phil Linqvist  
*Choir Director*

## 10:30am Church

2024 was a year when we can look back and see God's blessing and work in everything that we did. Throughout the year we saw continued growth in our 10:30 community, as more families joined our service, we saw continued growth in our Mandarin speaking community, and a deepening growth in our relationships within our service. It has been wonderful seeing the fruit of much work that has been done by our 10:30 translation team, who tirelessly work to live-translate our 10:30 service into Mandarin each week, to the benefit of our Mandarin speakers. Being able to hear prayers said together in both English and Mandarin simultaneously has been a huge encouragement!

One major highlight of 2024 was our bi-lingual baptism service, in which we saw 3 members baptized by Stuart, with the service being run in both English and Mandarin. God is working amongst those who are living around us, and drawing people into our community, and it is so encouraging to see that language is not a barrier to people joining us in praising God together.

We continue to go from strength to strength in our community, as witnessed each week by people spending longer and longer together over morning tea (though some might see it as early lunch), but we are able to draw closer together through the service of our members who turn up each week to love us and point us towards God in all that we do. I am so thankful to the many people who serve us at 10:30, whose desire it is to see our community grow deeper in love for each other. Without the many people who I serve alongside, our community would not be what it is.

As mentioned, we have seen growth in families over 2024, and it's been wonderful to see the development of new family relationships - as well as the addition of new members as newborns! Always a lovely way to grow the church. Our families ministry involves Creche, SwizKids and Junior Youth, with Hannah, Emilia (who has been busy growing the church), and Josh running these elements with a growing team of volunteers. Maintaining and growing this ministry through our 10:30 service is a key way that we can be intentionally discipling our kids to know and love our Lord, but also walk alongside the parents as they disciple their kids too.

If you haven't yet visited us and want to see what God is doing to grow this part of the Swiz community, please come and join us for a week. We'd love to have you with us, to sing praises together, and to share morning tea as well. Look forward to seeing you soon!

Andy Bell

*Assistant Minister | 10:30am*

## 6pm Night Church

Night Church at St Swithun's continues to be a place of Christian fellowship, energetic worship, and rich engagement with God's Word. Throughout the past year, we have seen slow but steady growth in attendance, with our average congregation size increasing from around 32 to 36 members. It has been encouraging to welcome new faces, particularly among young adults and senior high school students, even as some of our longer-standing members have transitioned to other services.

One of the most noticeable developments in 2024 has been the growth of our music ministry. Our band has steadily expanded, bringing new musicians into the team and modernising our style. This has enhanced our times of praise, helping to shape the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere of the service.

Beyond the service itself, Night Church remains a community built on strong relationships. Our post-service supper is a highlight each week, offering a space for sharing, thoughtful conversations, and fellowship that sometimes continues late into the evening. And the supper menu is amazing! This remains one of the great strengths of our congregation, fostering deep connections that extend well beyond Sunday nights.



This year also marked a transition in leadership, with my taking on the pastoral oversight of Night Church. We are grateful for Nigel Gray's faithful service among us over the years and thank him for the care and energy he has invested in this congregation.

As we look ahead, we pray for continued growth—not just in numbers, but in our depth of discipleship and community. May Night Church remain a welcoming and transformative space where people encounter Jesus, build lasting friendships, and grow in faith.

Rev. Stuart Holman  
*Senior Minister | 6pm Night Church*

## Children's Ministry

This year, our 10:30am kids' program, Swiz Kids & Creche, thrived in unity and community. We saw kids building friendships, welcoming new families, and growing together in faith.

We explored four key series, each shaping our identity as disciples of Jesus:

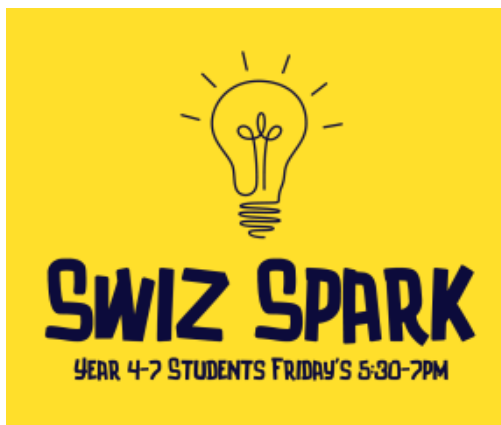
1. **Big Questions – My Lord, My God?** (Kids' own questions about God)
2. **Corinthians – To Corinth with Love**
3. **Matthew – Kingdom Kids** (Sermon on the Mount)
4. **Mark P2 – The King of God's Kingdom**

A highlight was Big Questions, where we tackled real questions from the kids. It was a stretching but rewarding series, with much fruit from deep discussions.



### HUB 2024

Partnering with St Andrew's Roseville again was a joy! It strengthened our local church connections and helped kids from different school's form friendships across communities.



### SPARK (Years 3-6)

Launched in March, SPARK started small but grew into a solid group of nine regulars. This Friday night program gives kids a safe space to explore faith, ask big questions, and discover Jesus. We journeyed through Youth Alpha, Luke's Gospel, and Discovering God. A highlight was our family camping trip in September—a big hit! We're excited to see SPARK grow even more in 2025



- Some of SPARK activities
- Youth Alpha
  - Fun games (Bottom L)
  - SPARK in the Dark (Bottom R)



### Thanking Our Leaders

Our kids' ministry wouldn't be possible without our incredible leaders! Please thank God for our 2024 team and pray for this year's leaders: Jess, Mikey, Mac, Josh, Joanne, Cate, Tim, and Jane.

### Special Religious Education (SRE)

We're grateful for our partnership with Pymble Public School and Gordon/Pymble Uniting, allowing us to teach 13 SRE classes last year. Our teachers faithfully shared Jesus' love, and as we step into 2025, please pray for: Hannah, Andy, Nigel, Anne Marie, Sarah, Margaret, Robyn, Larissa, Prue, Cheryl, and Line.

While we have just enough teachers, class numbers have dropped significantly. Please pray for the PPS community, our SRE teachers, and Nigel as he coordinates SRE in 2025, reaching out to the unchurched in Pymble.

Praise God for all He has done and will continue to do through Swiz Kids, Creche, SPARK, and SRE!

Hannah Killen  
*Children's & Youth Minister*

## Youth Ministry

In 2024, we took a new approach to Swiz Youth, focusing on building a welcoming, long-term, and sustainable ministry. At the start of the year, we concluded Friday nights as they were previously known, choosing instead to focus our efforts on Junior Youth and Senior Youth programs. This shift aimed to foster a culture where young disciples of Christ take on the mission to disciple others. We're already seeing great progress and fruit in this area, and we're excited to continue growing with our young people and see this ministry flourish.

### **KYCK 25**

One of the highlights of the year was taking a group of high schoolers to KYCK in the Blue Mountains. We had 16 youth join us, and it was incredible to see God working powerfully in many of their lives. We enjoyed hearing God's Word preached and growing together through fellowship. We can't wait to go again this year!



### **Junior Youth (Year 7-10)**

The Junior Youth program for Years 7-10 saw 3-6 youth attending each week during the 10:30 am Family Service. We met at the PACE Center for games and fellowship, with "Emperor-Scum" and "Jungle Speed" becoming crowd favourites by the end of the year. We finished the year by diving into Philippians, exploring how we are called to live as Jesus' disciples.



**Senior Youth (Year 10-11/12)**

This year, Senior Youth continued to meet weekly on Wednesday nights at Tim and Emilia's house in Turrumurra. Each gathering included snacks and games, with a favourite being "Coup," followed by an in-depth Bible study session.

In Term 4, with a new cohort joining, the location shifted first to Westleigh and then to the Hunziker's in Turrumurra at the start of the new year. This new group has seen 2-4 youth attending each week. We explored Philippians in depth and are now continuing with the sermon series in the new year.

Hannah Killen  
*Children's & Youth Minister*





## Ministry Systems Overview

At St Swithun's, we structure our ministries around four key Ministry Systems, each led by a member of staff. These systems ensure that our church remains focused on our vision to Welcome | Nurture | Serve, guiding our ministry areas and programs with clear priorities and purpose. By structuring our church this way, we ensure good alignment and that we are not isolated in 'silos' which separate us from members outside our regular ministry programs.

### **1. Outreach System (Led by Nigel Gray)**

The Outreach System equips our church to share the gospel with our local community and beyond, in word and deed. This includes structured evangelistic programs such as Hope Explored and Christianity Explored, as well as relationship-based outreach through ministries like Everyday English, and T48 Gym. It supports individuals in being 'everyday missionaries'—sharing Jesus in their workplaces, schools, and social circles.

### **2. Belonging System (Led by Andy Bell)**

The Belonging System ensures that newcomers find a home at St Swithun's and that long-term members feel deeply connected. It oversees welcoming teams, integration of new members, and ministries that foster relationships, such as Men's Breakfast, Art & Craft for All, Bridge for All, and church-wide hospitality initiatives

### **3. Maturity System (Led by Stuart Holman)**

The Maturity System focuses on deepening our knowledge of God and growing as disciples of Christ. This is achieved through biblical preaching, Home Groups, the Growing Disciples program, and structured training for ministry. The Maturity System engages with our discipleship initiatives for youth and children, ensuring a clear pathway for lifelong Christian growth.

### **4. Care System (Led by Chris Hollister)**

The Care System extends practical and pastoral support to those in need, both within and beyond our church community. This includes Pastoral Care Partners, Seniors Ministry, and practical support initiatives like meals and care packages. The system ensures that no one is overlooked, whether they are regular attendees or members of the wider community in crisis.

# 1. PASTORAL CARE AND PASTORAL PARTNERS

St Swithun's is a very caring church and many members of our church family lovingly provide care and assistance wherever they recognise a need.

Our revamped pastoral care system continued throughout the year with our pastoral partners reporting any pastoral matters of concern to staff. A morning tea was held early in the year with the aim of encouraging and emphasising the need for greater communication between pastoral partners and staff.

In order to lift the profile of pastoral care in the parish we decided to dedicate one Sunday a year to pastoral care. The first Sunday after St Swithun's day was chosen and a pastoral partner from each service gave a short talk explaining how the care system works for their particular service. A lunch for the pastoral partners was held in the PACE Centre.

In addition, to enable parishioners to get to know their pastoral partners better, a PowerPoint slide was prepared for the PowerPoint presentation for each service. These slides held the photos and names of the pastoral partners for the service in question and the slide was to form a permanent part of the PowerPoint presentation for that service.

Next year we plan to hold more training sessions to equip our pastoral partners for their work.



Stuart, Andy and Chris continue to meet every Thursday to pray for all pastoral partners and the pastoral needs of the parish.

Pastoral care is not confined to our pastoral partners. It is the privilege and responsibility of every member of our church family. It can be as simple as a phone call, a catch-up over a coffee, sharing a meal or just lending a sympathetic ear

Let's all "look out" for each other as we travel our "pilgrim paths", trusting in our gracious and loving Heavenly Father, ever grateful for his blessings and goodness and goodness to us. We pray he will help us in our efforts to serve him by welcoming, nurturing and serving his people both in our church family and the community beyond.

Chris Hollister  
*Seniors' Minister*



## 1.1 Seniors' Ministry

### **Seniors Seminar Series**

We decided to press “pause” on our seminar series this year as the Commonwealth Government will introduce a new Aged Care Act on July 1 2025. This new act makes some sweeping and important changes to aged care provisions, the services provided and how they will be accessed and paid for. That being the case, we will present a new series of seminars in mid-2025 to ensure all our seniors are kept informed of their rights and responsibilities should they need to access any of the aged care system's services.

### **Nursing Home Ministry**

Our ministry to the residents of Wahroonga House continues once a month with a small but very faithful group gathering for the service on the third Tuesday.

### **Mid-week Holy Communion Service**

This service of Holy Communion caters for those people who are unable, for whatever reason, to attend church on a Sunday. The service is followed by lunch and a time of fellowship and socialising which is enjoyed by all. We still have great pleasure in welcoming a busload of residents from Roden Cutler Lodge and there is fierce competition amongst the residents for a chance to attend.



### **Online Congregation**

There are many people who just cannot attend church on a Sunday. These people comprise our online congregation, watching the livestream of the 9am service every Sunday.

The service is also screened at Wahroonga House and Roden Cutler Lodge so residents can “go to church on Sunday” as they used to.

The service is very much appreciated by our viewers who tell us they really feel as if they belong to the church.

### **Seniors Balance Class**

The attendance at these twice-monthly classes continues to grow with newcomers swelling our numbers every session and the church hall being filled to capacity. Everyone who attends really appreciates the benefits of improved balance and growing confidence in movement. Our wonderful physiotherapist, Robyn Dearnley, puts attendees through a thorough regime of exercises aimed at keeping them confidently on their feet and moving well and she is ably assisted by two volunteers. Lunch is served after the class on the third Tuesday and the time of fellowship is enjoyed by all. Next year we will need to make a decision about increasing the number of classes offered.

### **Service of Solace and Consolation**

We held our annual Service of Solace and Consolation on the second Thursday of December. This service recognises that Christmas is always a challenging time for those who have lost loved ones or have loved ones in care. The service is always well attended and appreciated by all attendees. A time of fellowship and sharing was enjoyed over lunch in the hall.



None of the activities for seniors in this church and beyond could function without the dedication and willing help of a wonderful team of volunteers who cook and serve meals, provide musical accompaniment to services, assist with balance classes and set out furniture. I thank you all for your gracious generosity and servant hearts in giving your time and using your gifts to enable these activities to take place.

Chris Hollister  
*Seniors' Minister*



## 2. MATURITY MINISTRY SYSTEM REPORT

The Maturity Ministry System aims to grow mature disciples of Christ, who make mature disciples of Christ. Such maturity is evidenced by a person's engagement in welcoming, nurturing and serving others; from conversion to glory. This maturity grows as we personally engage with God in both corporate and individual settings.

The Maturity System oversees the preaching and teaching of God's word at our services and the bible study discussion materials provided to our Home Groups. Broadly, these are corporate activities that feed our maturity in the public sphere. The Maturity Ministry System also seeks to provide resources and encouragement that encourages growth in the personal and private sphere of our devotional lives.

The Growing Disciples program  
([www.growingdisciples.net.au](http://www.growingdisciples.net.au))  
was developed to assist in



building a regular practice of reading the bible, praying, and exploring other spiritual disciplines. 2024 saw the continuation and refinement of this program, with attempts to add a Beginners Stream and a Studies Stream to the initial Biblical Narrative Stream (a journey through the narrative of the whole bible in a year). Unfortunately I did not find sufficient time to write the Beginners Stream this year—but there's always next year! Currently there are more than 290 daily subscribers, with about 100 of these identifiable as members of St Swithun's.

Other important contributors to the maturing process of a Christian are the ministry and leadership opportunities available to them, and the training provided to enable them to succeed and grow in each. For example, when a Christian first teaches a Scripture Class or does a Children's talk, they will learn much from the process. If they accompany some friends invited to an evangelistic course, they will certainly grow in their ability to converse about their faith. Hence, we mature as we serve.

During 2024, Jo Trevitt, Terry Dein and I began work on an important resource for our Home Group Leaders which is designed to support them in their role and provide a 'training manual' for new leaders. The Swiz Home Groups Manual will be completed in 2025 and introduced to each of our groups as either Terry or I meet with the group.

I am grateful for the support, encouragement and partnership of Joanne Trevitt, Terry Dein, Andy Bell and Nigel Gray in developing materials for our Maturity Ministry System.

Stuart Holman  
*Maturity Ministry System Leader*

## 2.1 Home Groups

Home Groups are the beating heart of any church. They are the place where we most feel that we ‘belong’ to St Swithun’s, as well as a place of significant growth in our faith and Christian experience. For this latter reason, they come under the umbrella of our Maturity Ministry System.

I am so grateful for all those who serve us as Leaders of these groups. You do a wonderful job and have such an impact in the lives of many. Thank you!



During 2024 we had 16 Home Groups in operation, as well as our Friday Women’s Bible Study and Men-in-the-Morning (Thursdays). There were a total of 237 members registered in these groups, although it would be fair to say that actual weekly attendance would be closer to 50% of this number. Looking collectively at all our groups, this would represent a system in stasis over the past year. A small number of groups grew in number while many remained static or lost members through attrition.

The size of our groups also tells a story. Most Home Groups have many more than 10 members—8 to 10 members being an optimal size. In discussion with groups, I note a reluctance to change. Stable social dynamics and the long histories of our groups naturally cause us to want to hold on to what we’ve got.

When a Home Groups system is static, it becomes more difficult for groups within that system to change and grow. At the end of 2023, sensing their need for renewal, one group made a decision to change up its membership and leadership. Unable to recruit members not currently in a group, or to swap members with other groups; and unable to find new leaders within their own group, they returned to the safety of what they had known for several years. This group resumed meeting as it had before, perhaps having lost a member or two in the difficult process of attempting change.

This story demonstrates the difficulties of growth and change within a closed and static system of Home Groups. In the coming year we want to revitalize our Home Groups system by developing a ‘leadership pathway’ that recruits, trains and equips new leaders for our groups.

But this will not be as simple as it sounds because most of our groups have a shared or rotating model of leadership; a different person leading the study each week. This occurs within a culture that sees leadership as ‘facilitating a discussion’ rather than a focused intent to foster maturity in others. Without diminishing the important pastoral and social functions of our groups, we will need to grow leaders who nurture progress as disciples of Christ.

Our existing Home Groups model means that this leadership training and development is best located within each group, as it meets. This will be our ‘leadership pathway’ model going forward into 2025, with perhaps two ‘coordination’ leaders meetings throughout the year. The launch of our Swiz Home Groups Manual will also assist us in these steps forward in the coming year.

Stuart Holman

*Senior Minister | Maturity System Leader*





## 2.2 Women's Friday Bible Study (WFBS)

Women's Friday Bible Study continued to meet in the PACE centre each Friday morning during school terms. We gather for morning tea at 10am for a time of fellowship before the study begins at 10.30am.

Our studies during the year included the book of Daniel, Colossians, Luke and a series on God's Faithful Witnesses e.g. Hannah and Mary, Deborah, Eric Liddell and Corrie ten Boom. Attendance was usually between 40-50 with others using the Zoom facility.



World Day of Prayer was hosted by Holy Name Cathedral Wahroonga with the focus on Palestine.

Ann Powell once again organised our Quiet Day in Term 1. Her creativity brings refreshment and enlightenment.

Our Open Day in Term 111 saw over 80 people in attendance in the Church hall to hear Joanna Adams share her faith with an arrangement of classical and contemporary songs from well known musicals. A delicious morning tea was served prior to her presentation. By popular demand we have invited her to return in 2025.

We were delighted to welcome some new speakers this year including Fiona Simpkin & Bernadette Miflin from Seaforth Anglican, Colin Watson and Alison Whalley.

Although it is officially his day off our Senior Minister, Stuart Holman, has graciously led some of our studies for which we were very grateful.

Jennie Liu and Pamela Summers continue to provide the technology expertise to ensure our presentation is of a high standard. We thank them for their commitment and service.



Rosemary Osborne, musical accompanist extraordinaire, plays beautiful hymns while we enjoy morning tea and then accompanies the singing of the hymn chosen by the speaker of the day. Although living with major health issues, Rosemary's faith and gift of musicianship is a wonderful witness to us all. May God continue to bless her in his service.

I am indebted to our Group Leaders who plan the programme for the year and invite the various speakers. They are also responsible for overseeing the pastoral care of their specific group. Without the commitment of these wise and Christian women this ministry would not exist.

Kay Bruce continues as our Treasurer and organised for us to contribute funds to a project run by Barnabas Aid in which villages are provided with clean water.

Thank you to all the women who generously give to the "Blue Box" each week.

Christmas lunch was a colourful occasion to end the year. Group tables were festooned with candles and bright Christmas decorations. As usual we enjoyed a delicious lunch. Entertainment came in the form of a hilarious video depicting The Twelve Days of Christmas performed by a pastor and his church in America.

If you are interested in finding out more about WFBS please contact St Swithun's office on 9488 7377 or Fran Durand on 0419 699 964.

Fran Durand  
*Coordinator*

### 3. BELONGING

In 2024, we made some great progress in the Belonging space. The Belonging Committee was established, with members across our 3 services, and began to work together in helping St Swithun's to become a community where everyone is known, valued, and loved. We are aiming to make our community be a place where everyone is welcome, to be a village hub, where we share our lives together and walk alongside each other in all things.

We held our first Welcome Lunches – in fact, we held 2 – in 2024, inviting people who were new to our Swiz community, people who were more on the edges of our community, and some established members. Both lunches were very successful in helping those who came to connect with people from their service, understand more about what it means to be a member of our community – all while having an excellent lunch together. My thanks goes to the Belonging Committee, for their help in organizing, catering, and being available for any type of help to run these lunches. Our first lunch for 2025 is due to be in late March – please be praying for it!

We also ran a church-wide picnic at Bobbin Head in the early part of 2024, and it was such a joy to see our Swiz community all in one place at the same time! We enjoyed a lovely lunch together, meeting others from our different services, and indulging in the beautiful weather that God provided for us. These types of events help us, as a community, to see what God is doing in our midst, so that we can be encouraged to continue to love and serve our brothers and sisters each week.



Church-wide picnic at Bobbin Head

Please pray for us as we continue to look at ways to better engage newcomers when they come to us for the first time, and every time thereafter. A particular aim for 2025 will be to spend time making our Welcoming system work well, as we find the best way to welcome new people, connect them with our community in ways that they find useful, and help them to find their place in the Swiz community quickly. We have space for everyone here at Swiz, and I pray that God will continue to use us to grow his Kingdom here in Pymble.

Andy Bell  
*Assistant Minister | Belonging*



## 3.1 St Swithun's Men's Breakfast

### 2024 Summarised

The bare statistics are as follows:	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Number of breakfasts	49	48
Friday Barbecues	3	2
Average number of attendees	21	20
Donations to KCEA and TCEA	\$4,000	\$5,500

Apart from the strong sense of fellowship at our breakfasts, and hot porridge through the winter months, we have a regular program of guest speakers. Chris Clark has had all of the contacts, and arranged a wide variety of guests. There have been speakers from within the breakfast group, from within the St Swithun's parish, and from faith-based organisations within New South Wales, Australia, and internationally.

For example, we have been addressed by representatives of:

- Morling College,
- Bush Church Aid,
- Rural Fire Service chaplaincy,
- Barker College's new campus near Darwin,
- Scripture Union.

Speakers from Christian organisations working beyond Australia:

- Kent and Ruth Hodge from Christian Fellowship Ministries in Nigeria,
- Jude Simeon from Philoi Global,
- Ashley Saunders from Barnabas Aid,
- A team from MegaVoice, providing oral Bibles in developing countries,
- Peter Magee from Operation Abba.

For many years, breakfast has been under the watchful stewardship of Chris Clark. He has presided over our meetings, kept watch on the time, arranged the guest speakers and generally done everything needed to keep the event going. With great regret, we learned in June that Chris had been admitted to hospital with a serious medical condition that kept him bed-ridden for the rest of the year.

Stuart appointed a steering committee of four to continue the job that Chris had managed alone.

We also bade farewell to a long-standing member, Allin Cousens. His funeral was held in a very full church on Monday 22 April with due ceremony for a departed Kiwi.

### **Mission support**

We collect \$5 from everyone attending a breakfast, except invited guests of course. After claimed expenses, we support the Christian Education Associations that employ qualified religious teachers at both Ku-ring-gai and Turramurra High Schools. By keeping in touch with our parish representatives on both organisations, we can direct funds where they are most needed.

### **Thanks are due to:**

- Chris Clark for his diligence and care of the group over many years;
- Stuart Holman for his support of the group and his bi-monthly Bible Studies;
- David Barling for quiet, efficient management of all catering;
- The men who volunteer to assist David with the weekly set-up and catering;
- Guest speakers from within and outside the group;
- The steering committee members, Richard Kaan, James Allington, Neil Spencer and Brian Watson.

Brian Watson

*for the Steering Committee*



## 3.2 Art & Craft For All

**AIM:** To provide a friendly welcoming Christian environment for men and women from our church and the wider community to explore and encourage one another in the areas of Art, Knitting and other Crafts. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month from 9:30am-12 noon in the church hall. We have a very relaxed atmosphere as we share our creative activities and enjoy company and conversation together. We enjoy delicious morning tea provided by our members on a voluntary basis. All are welcome to come when they can and leave when they must.

### ART

Our group of artists have enjoyed painting together again this year, working in various mediums such as watercolour, pastels, acrylics or sketching. Numbers have fluctuated between 7 and 12, and we are always pleased to welcome participants whenever they can make it, or if they can only stay part of the time. There is always the opportunity to work with a still life arrangement or pursue their own projects in company with friends.

We are very grateful to Ros Shillito for generously providing some guidance in the use of watercolour paints, and a number of enthusiastic 'students' have been much encouraged and produced some very pleasing paintings.

Our thanks also go to Henry Harrison and Dorothy Davis for their lovely watercolour cards, which are extremely well-received at the Mini Mission Market each month.

Susan Smart  
*Coordinator*



## CRAFT

Aim: To show the Love of Christ in caring handmade gifts.

Our monthly numbers are small, but creativity in the form of knitting and stitching is BIG. We also have ladies from inside and outside Swiz who have participated in our projects. Ladies unable to attend our monthly meetings.

This was especially the case, when we knitted our gift of a blanket and a cushion for our dear Kate Boyd for her birthday. Kate has been a much loved member of Swiz for many years and attends our 6pm service. Thank you to all those who knitted the squares and those who put them together and crocheted the edge of this large blanket. Thank you to Annette Cousens for creating the cushion.



Projects for the year are as follows

- Small knee rugs made from individual knitted squares, brought back to Australia from Switzerland by Robin Hall.
- Gifts of knitted miniature socks containing a Bible verse to those attending our Every Day English Christmas Dinner. Knitted bears for the children.
- Gifts of beanies and socks taken by Jenny Liu back to Hubei, China. These were given to the congregation there on the occasion of Jenny's mother's Baptism. A gift of celebration, love and sharing from Swiz.
- Pymble Public School, over 200 socks containing a Bible Verse distributed to the children at Christmas.
- Beanies, Jumpers, baby dresses and adult blouses sent to Kiriwina, New Guinea. They become a part of the birthing packs given to the ladies attending the New Mothers Clinic run by Australian nurses.



- Small comfort angels to many special people, both inside and outside our Church.
- Beanies and bears for the Children's Hospital ICU.
- Knitted bears and small knee rugs to the hospitalised children and teenagers in RNSH Hospital School.
- Bears to Northern Beaches Hospital.
- Gifts for Berkeley.
- Comfort bears to St Johns Ambulance St Ives.



My sincere thanks to all the crafters, you have done an amazing job. Thank you also for the encouraging support of staff and donations of wool and materials from our congregation. By the GRACE OF GOD you have all made this Christian outreach possible.

Michele Thompson



### 3.3 Bridge For All

Richard and I have been running a small group of Bridge players for a couple of years now, as part of an effort to reach out to our community.

We meet in the Lounge on the first Monday of each month at 10am, and we usually have about 3-4 tables of players. We are not interested in very serious bridge, but enjoy good fellowship, and it has proved to be a great way of meeting new people and learning how we can support one another.

We are not able to teach bridge, but we do welcome any who would like to join us. If you play bridge, or used to play bridge, or indeed if you have a friend who would like to join us, please pop in on a Monday morning—first one each month.

We realize that not everyone is free every month, so it is a good place to come if you wish to enjoy cards with no pressure, and practice your bridge.

Jenny and Richard Kaan  
*Coordinators*



## 4. OUTREACH

The outreach opportunities members of St Swithun's have had over the last year are innumerable! Every day, every member of St Swithun's has opportunities to reach out to family members, friends, neighbours, work colleagues, school mates, teammates and so on. The sum of these opportunities goes far and away beyond the boundaries of what the staff team is involved in or by what happens on church property. This being the case, it's impossible for any one person to write an annual report that covers all the outreach members of St Swithun's have engaged in.

Once again, we rejoice to hear of church members taking the initiative to reach out to others. Members of St Swithun's have continued to take a lead in running Christian fellowship meetings in retirement villages like Fernbank and McQuoin Park. In other locations, Christian services have been led by staff on a regular basis.

15 parishioners did the Hope Explored course in terms 3 and 4. An encouraging development here was that some brought friends along and others were checking it out for future reference. One parishioner ran it in his apartment with five or six neighbours. Upon its conclusion, they decided they wanted to continue to meet every other week to study the Bible.

Six members of St Swithun's taught Scripture at Pymble Public School last year. That meant 173 children got to hear from the Bible nearly every week of the school term. The office recently received an email from an ex-student. *"St Swithun's ran the Scripture classes back when I was at PPS. Mrs Cousens was a fantastic teacher who had such a clear love for God. This was in 1986 so it was some time ago now!"* There must be many, many adults out there who would express similar appreciation (if they didn't have to go to the trouble!) Sadly, it seems fewer parents are giving their children the opportunity. The number of children enrolled in 2025 has fallen by 22% to 153.

In terms of events, our Carols in the Park evening in Bannockburn Oval was, once again, the standout highlight. What a joy to see so many neighbours coming out to enjoy a programme that centred on the real meaning of Christmas! Our sincere thanks go to all those who worked so hard to make that happen.

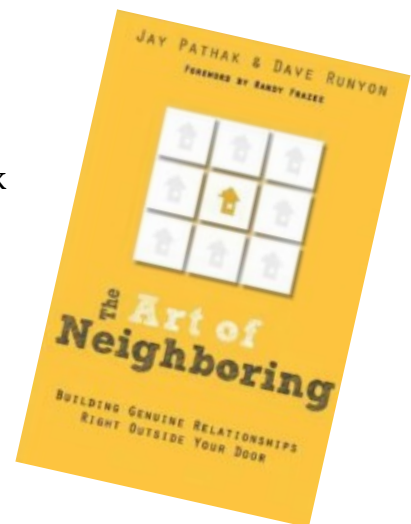


It is encouraging to see the growth of outreach to the family and friends of our Everyday English students. The Chinese Christmas Dinner was a great success and similarly the Chinese New Year lunch. How wonderful it is to see so many people availing of our simultaneous translation at the 10:30am service!



Our monthly outreach spots have given us some challenging insights into the rich variety of ways in which parishioners are reaching out to the family, friends and neighbours.

Perhaps the most significant outreach initiative this year has been our recent sermon and Bible study series on Loving Thy Neighbour. 30 people have bought the book *The Art of Neighbouring* that calls us to work on our Block Plan and host Block Parties. We've all been challenged to get to know our neighbours – a step that, nowadays, must precede our attempts to invite them to church and/or share the gospel with them. If we all put this teaching into practice, there next year's annual report could be significantly longer! What will God do in, among and through us if we take obeying his Great Commandment much more seriously in the coming year?



Nigel Gray  
*Assistant Pastor*

## 4.1 T48

T48 is a Christ-centered gym ministry for young people, inspired by 1 Timothy 4:8: *"For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."*

As a ministry of St. Swithun's, T48's mission is to provide an inclusive space for Christians from local churches to grow in maturity, build a diverse community, and connect with others across different contexts.

Launched last year, T48 has continued to flourish throughout this year. Due to changes in our Friday night youth ministry, we decided to cease our youth gym sessions. This shift allowed us to focus our efforts on our Sunday young adult sessions, held from 3:00 to 5:00pm.

Throughout the year, we have welcomed a diverse group of participants, including Christians, non-Christians, locals, and visitors from as far as Penrith. Our community has grown through various activities, such as vision days with shared BBQs and Sunday sessions featuring ice baths and protein shakes.

This year, T48 expanded to include Monday and midweek sessions designed for smaller groups and intentional outreach. One highlight is the young adults' Bible study that gathers at the gym on Mondays, followed by dinner and further Bible discussion.

Beyond physical training, T48 continues to be a place for spiritual conversations, fellowship, and mutual encouragement. We've seen participants grow in their faith and build meaningful connections within our community.





As we look to the future, we are excited to see how T48 will continue to grow as a connection point that bridges the gap between the unchurched and our Sunday services. We are eager to see this ministry expand, fostering deeper relationships and encouraging spiritual growth for all who join us.

With God's guidance, we anticipate even more opportunities to impact our community and bring glory to His name in the coming year.

Hannah Killen  
*T48 Team Member*



## 4.2 Everyday English

In the last year Everyday English has achieved a successful year of consolidation and growth. Extensive training through Anglicare has helped teachers and helpers develop into an experienced group to deliver the programmes to our students.



Student attending vary between 30 and 40 each week with new students joining each week. Students come from a variety of countries including China, South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan and Iran.

The objectives of Everyday English are to welcome our neighbours from non-English speaking backgrounds into our community, teach them English to enhance their lives in Australia and to experience Christian love in their daily lives.

Everyday English is conducted every Thursday morning in school term time in the PACE Centre, Church Hall and Lounge. It is structured into four classes based on the student's English skills.



**Advanced Class** students already have good English skills and want to improve their fluency and conversational abilities. Led by Sue Chilton their time together focuses on discussion, while including vocabulary, pronunciation and some grammar lessons. We have welcomed several new students in the past year from Japan, Korea and China, bringing our numbers up to 8-10 most weeks.

The students have a fascinating range of knowledge and experience unrelated to language learning and we have enjoyed learning from each other. At the end of most terms we enjoy an outing together, usually lunch at a restaurant, but last June one of the students hosted us all at his house.



**Intermediate Class** caters for students with some basic English language abilities and teaches grammar, sentence construction, vocabulary, listening and speaking skills. We look at Australian culture and our way of life with recent subjects including Australian animals, the history of immigration into Australia and holidays and festivals.. Every week we have a Bible Spot where students read the passage aloud and answer some questions to reinforce their understanding and increase their English vocabulary. The Intermediate class is taught by Richard Hobson assisted by Julia Green.

**The Upper Beginners** class meets each Thursday morning in the Lounge. Our class consists of a core group of students some of whom have been with us for several years. We are fortunate to have four regular teachers, Sharna Philips, Louise Small, Linda Gray and Annie Kee, and we have developed strong bonds with this core group over time whilst welcoming newcomers. Some students are with us for a short period of time before returning to China, and others who return to the class after being in China for an extended time.

The students have developed their confidence in using basic English and we have covered topics including aspects of health-related issues, housing and transport. We ask the students at the beginning of each term what topics they wish to cover and we formulate our teaching program according to their choices. They love their weekly homework sheets which give them an opportunity to share what they have been doing in class with their families. Students who have been attending regularly have formed a tightknit social group often meeting at each other's homes or sharing outings together.

Our weekly Bible spots have been well received and the students particularly enjoyed the six lessons on the book of Ruth. Some of our students have joined the Mandarin Christianity Explained group which is run by Jenny Liu each week.

In November we had an excursion to Wahroonga Park where we enjoyed an "Australian" Christmas morning tea- shortbread, mince pies, Christmas cake and the following week the students provided Chinese food for a final year Presentation Lunch which was attended by all the classes and where the students were presented with certificates by Stuart.





Our **Foundation Beginner** students come to us with little or no English skills. When student numbers reached a record number of twenty-five in mid 2024 we undertook an extensive revision to our methods to improve the learning and enjoyment in the class. With the expert assistance of Trish Bell and training support from Anglicare the team of Carolyn Cooper, Doe Davies, Anne Huang and Ann Marie Leung Morrow are achieving impressive improvements by adding some exciting and fun activities to our lessons.



We acknowledge the dedication and enthusiasm of all the teachers and helpers who have contributed to the success of Everyday English through the last year and Annette Cousens and her team of ladies who make and serve morning tea every week.

Please pray for:

- the students to hear and respond to God's love
- more volunteers to come forward as teachers, helpers and translators
- more ESL students to join our classes

Richard Hobson  
*Coordinator*

## 4.3 Mandarin Ministry

We thank God for the promise that “But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.” (John 1:12) Many brothers and sisters have come to know our Lord Jesus and strengthened in their faith through the Mandarin ministry at Swiz.

In 2024, we re-introduced a short Bible study following the Thursday Everyday English class to give our Mandarin-speaking friends the opportunity to learn His Word and the Gospel.

For our Friday Mandarin Bible study, held during the school term, we completed the Gospel of John and began studying the Book of Acts. It has been truly encouraging to see how the Gospel spread first from Jerusalem to other parts of the world (Acts 1:8).

In June 2024, we resumed Mandarin translation during the 10:30 am family service. We thank God for a dedicated team of brothers and sisters who take turns providing translation via headphones using radio frequency 89.6 Hz. This has enabled Chinese families—both young and old—to worship together in Mandarin and English while also participating in Sunday School.

In August 2024, we witnessed the baptism of the Sun family—Jay, and Sunny—as well as Jian Chun. It was incredibly inspiring to see how God continues to bring people into His family through the Mandarin outreach ministry.



In December 2024, we organised a Christmas party attended by about 80 people, where the true story of Christmas was shared alongside a wonderful meal. We thank God for the cross-cultural ministry at St. Swithun's, which brings the Good News to our Mandarin-speaking friends, who in turn can take the Gospel back to Asia.



Please pray for more personnel and resources to sustain the ongoing translation ministry at our family service.

Betty Huen & Jenny Liu  
*Coordinators*

## 5. PRAYER MINISTRY

**“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-28**

### **Answered Prayer**

It is good when we come together to thank our Heavenly Father for the grace and the blessings he has given throughout this past year. Individually and corporately, we have seen God answer our prayers. We are thankful for the focussed prayers which are listed in the Swiz Mail each week which help us to pray for members of our congregation who may be ill or in nursing homes, as well as for our needy world.

### **Prayer Notes for Core Matters.**

This year we farewelled Core Matters in its present form whilst other formats are considered. Thank you to all church members who regularly contributed to this ministry.

### **Online - 9am Zoom Weekly Prayer Meeting**

Thank you to the faithful group of people who meet each week during term time to pray for the needs of our church, the community and the wider world. We meet at 9am on Tuesday mornings and the details are in Swiz Mail, if any more information is needed, please speak to me.

### **Intercessory Prayer at All Services.**

Once again, we thank you for all those who lead intercessory prayers at different services, bringing the needs of our church, wider community and world before the congregations so that we can all pray together. We appreciate your preparation and your willingness to serve in this way.

### **Prayer Chain**

Members respond in prayer for any request that Stuart sends to them about an urgent prayer need. This is a very valuable part of the prayer ministry as we respond by bring those in need to God in prayer.

### **Prayer Across All Groups at St Swithun's.**

It is good to remember that nearly every day prayer is offered up from most of the activities that meet each week. Home Groups include times of prayer as do the Women's Bible Study, Men's Breakfast, the Youth Ministry and the Ministry Meeting each Tuesday.

### **Hope 25 Interchurch Prayer Meetings, via Zoom**

These have taken place on the third Thursday of the month from September 2024 in preparation for the evangelist plans for 2025.

## **Prayer Event of 2024**

**Ascension Day Parish Prayer Meeting for Peace**, Thursday 8 May in Church  
Topics and prayers were led by members from all services. 25 people attended in person and 12 joined via Zoom to pray for peace across our world. We also prayed for the persecuted church in various parts of the world.

## **Plans for 2025**

Stuart and I met in January to discuss prayer across the church in line with the conviction of Stuart and the ministry team that prayer should be our number one priority, and this will be reflected in the Ministry Plan. It is planned embed prayer across all or our Ministry Systems – Maturity, Belonging, Pastoral Care and Outreach. Each ministry team will appoint a dedicated Prayer Co-ordinator to champion and facilitate prayer. I will continue as the Parish Prayer Co-ordinator. There will also be a Sermon Series on Prayer for five weeks from September to October.

The Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday March 5th will include a short time of silent prayer with prompts.

**Parish wide Prayer Meetings** are proposed on the following dates:

- 7pm Wednesday March 26 in church.
- 7pm Wednesday June 18 (online)
- 7pm Tuesday August 12 (online)

## **Interchurch Prayer Meetings for Hope 25**

These will continue on the third Thursday of every month via Zoom.

February 20th March 20th. Then we will collaborate with other parishes for other on-line or in person meetings on these proposed dates.

Wednesdays April 2nd, 9th, 23rd and 30th. More details will be given nearer the dates.

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Philippians.” 4: 6-7*

Finally, as we continue this year of 2025 lets take this verse to heart, to not be anxious but to pray in the knowledge that the surpassing peace of God will be with us and guard our hearts and minds. This is an inspiring verse.

Margaret Knuckey  
*Parish Prayer Coordinator*

## 6. MISSIONS BEYOND THE PARISH

Our livestreamed church service reaches an average 130 screens each week—not knowing how many people this might represent. We know that some of our regular online members live internationally, as do some of our 280 daily Growing Disciples subscribers. Our library of video sermons is also freely available. So we can be greatly encouraged that our ministry makes an impact well beyond the ‘Parish of Pymble’.

We are so grateful for the many ways in which our members support our Missions Partners and Berkeley Parish Partner. The following reports detail some of this work throughout the past year.



## 6.1 Missions Committee

The Missions Committee has had another encouraging year as we continue to support and engage with both local and global mission initiatives. We are deeply grateful for the faithfulness and generosity of our congregation, whose prayers, financial contributions, and hands-on involvement make this work possible.

### **Committee Update**

The members of the Missions Committee (a Sub-committee of Parish Council) are: Bruce Kinghorn, Leonie Anderson, Sue Barling, David Barling, Andy Bell, Stuart Holman, George Huen, Sarah Hunziker, Ross Millar, Fred Morris, Sharna Philips, Paul Sampson, Susan Smart.

The committee met six times in 2024. During the year, our inspirational chairman, Bruce Kinghorn, retired for medical reasons. We are incredibly grateful for his years of faithful service and the wisdom and dedication he brought to this role. Until a suitable replacement is found, I am serving as interim chairman.

### **Local Missions**

We have maintained strong partnerships with local outreach programs, particularly supporting high school SRE (Special Religious Education) workers through KCEA and TCEA, as well as Bush Church Aid missionaries, the Roberts, serving in Exmouth, WA. These ministries play a crucial role in sharing the gospel with young people and supporting communities in remote areas.

### **Global Missions**

This year, we continued our commitment to supporting several global mission partners: Chris Hingley (Zimbabwe), Evangeline Sita (Hyderabad, India), Tashil Singh (George Whitefield College, South Africa), Elizabeth (Church Missionary Society, Middle East)

Our financial and prayer support has enabled these partners to continue their work in evangelism, theological education, high school education and discipleship in their respective regions.

### **Mega Missions Morning**

One of the highlights of our year was the Mega Missions Morning in November, which was a great success. Through the incredible generosity of our congregation, we raised nearly \$50,000 for the George Whitefield College 'Explore' Bible Training program, equipping remote pastors across sub-Saharan Africa. Beyond the fundraising achievement, this event helped raise awareness of all our mission partners and provided a wonderful opportunity for intergenerational fellowship and fun.

The Committee has already decided that it will support the ministry of Youthworks through another Mega Missions Morning in 2025.

## Looking Ahead

As we move forward, we seek to deepen our impact through greater congregational engagement, prayer, and support. We are exploring new opportunities and partnerships with local and international mission partners.

Once again, we extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has given, prayed, made or purchased marmalade and other market items this year. May we continue to be faithful to the Great Commission, sharing the love and hope of Christ with the world.

Stuart Holman,  
*Interim Chairman, Missions Committee*



Members of WFBS preparing the Berkeley board for display



Mission partner boards were displayed around the hall



## 6.2 Mission Partners

### **Chris Hingley in Zimbabwe**

Chris Hingley has been our Mission Partner in Zimbabwe for many years, formerly as the Rector of the Petra Schools and founding pastor of Whitestone Chapel. He is currently as the Chaplain at Whitestone School in Bulawayo and leader of the annual Aslan Camp in August.



Chris has a significant ministry with children and young people in that country where there is much hardship. His role in organising the camp and pastoring provides an opportunity for children and young people to enjoy some time in a safe environment where they can be carefree. Chris also runs afternoon or evening groups for high school students and a Friday night youth gathering for 50 teenagers, called “Fridays with Aslan”.



### **Evangeline Sita at St Andrew’s School n Hyderabad, India**

In 1993 a young student and teacher, Miss Evangeline Sita, together with her cousin, Sanjay, gathered a group of under-privileged children from one of the poorest areas in Hyderabad and began an open-air school beneath a tree.

Since then, St Andrew's High School has graduated many students each year and are achieving remarkable academic results at the highest level. The school ranges from pre-primary to Year 10. Covid was very tough for them, but they have managed to

continue paying their teachers due to our support. Many other schools have no teachers. They have a library, science lab with equipment, hall with audio visual classes, various sport activities and they participate in inter-school activities. They also hold a national festival where they invite important dignitaries. A Christmas programme is held where they learn the story of Jesus.

Evangeline and Sanjay are very grateful for the ongoing support from St Swithun’s which enables them to continue with this wonderful work.

### **James Thomas with Global Recordings Network (GRN)**

The 7bn or so mobile handsets being used all around the world today present enormous opportunities for sharing the good news about Jesus. The GRN works to deliver gospel audio content via mobile devices to the people of the world who are least reached by the gospel.

James is GRN's Mobile Technologist He leads the implementation of GRN's strategy to deliver free gospel content via mobile devices. GRN distributes Bible stories recorded in 6,000 language dialects to mobile phone users in 170 countries. James works in Sydney, leading a team of software developers and testers. GRN's outreach website (5fish.mobi) and 5fish mobile app (5fish) provide easy access to free content online for listening to and sharing person to person using SD cards, Bluetooth, or portable media players.



They have been focusing on making the 5fish app accessible in more languages and have introduced nine new interface languages (used for the button labels, titles, help text etc.) They are continuing to add gospel content in more languages and are working on including LUMO Gospel Films.

### **Tashil Singh at George Whitefield College (GWC), Cape Town, South Africa**



GWC is an important contributor to theological education in Africa, preparing students for ministries of the Word of God in South Africa, greater Africa and beyond. The College's mission is "to shape minds via a classical theological education, create hearts devoted to Christian service, and train voices to effectively communicate the Word of Christ".

Tashil is our student that we are supporting at GWC. He comes from Durban, South Africa and is single.

Tashil became a Christian in 2019 when he was convicted of his sin and knew that Jesus Christ wanted him to repent and believe in him. When he qualifies, he would like to return to his home church and serve there for several years.

He preaches at Christ Church, Newlands in Cape Town on two or more Sundays a month, at Teen Ministry every other Sunday. He leads the service, and helps with admin work, property maintenance, the projection team and is a music team assistant.

His notable skills are critical thinking, working under pressure, time management and multi-tasking.

### **Elizabeth in the Middle East**

After studying at Moore College and training at St Andrew’s Hall, Elizabeth went to the Middle East at the beginning of 2020 to work in a rapidly growing ministry at a large expats church. Elizabeth is now serving in “a church for people who think they don’t like church”. The church’s vision is to help people come to know God, equip them and then send them back to their home countries to share the good news. More than 4,000 people attend the five services and there are many different ministries over a number of locations.

### **Cameron & Alex Jones with Irish Church Missions, Dublin**



Cameron and Alex Jones are from Sydney and attended Christ Church St Ives. Cameron is an ordained minister in the Church of Ireland (Anglican) and has served in All Saints Church Belfast. Ireland is the least evangelised country in the English-speaking world. The Society for the Irish Church Mission was founded in 1849 and is committed to seeing gospel-believing gospel-sharing churches established and strengthened. In Dublin, with its population of 1.2

million, there are only about 10 churches that are theologically evangelical, two of which are ICM churches. The gospel need is immense.

Cameron is a pioneer Evangelist for Church Planting and is responsible for the Dublin Bible Talks (Silicon Docks Project). This work is building trusted relationships with existing believers, so that they are encouraged to consider the Dublin Bible Talks as a good use of one lunchtime a week. Its primary focus is to help believers grow and share their beliefs with colleagues and invite them to the talks to learn about Jesus.

Cameron preaches every month for a rural group of parishes in Co. Cavan. He also assists with preaching at ICM’s Immanuel Church and often travels to encourage and support other churches both mid-week and on Sundays.

**Simon & Alison Roberts**  
**in Exmouth, WA with Bush Church Aid**  
 Simon & Alison Roberts took up a ministry position in Exmouth, WA in 2021.



Exmouth is a town on the tip of the North West Cape in WA, around 1250 kilometres north of Perth in the Diocese of North West Australia. It is predominantly a tourism town, famous for the Ningaloo Reef and Cape Range National Park, meaning thousands of tourists bolster the town's population of 2200 throughout the year. Locals are involved in industries like tourism, fishing and maintenance of the nearby Naval base. Simon, who was the senior minister at St Mark's Malabar in Sydney, is committed to making disciples who make disciples.



**Ku-ring-gai Christian Education Association (KCEA) - Andy Tuskan**

In 2022 Andy was appointed as the SRE teacher at Ku-ring-gai High School. Andy writes: "I'm married to Jade and we live in Carlingford."



I have a real passion for ministry to teenagers having been in youth ministry for most of my adult life. I teach on Mondays and Wednesdays at KHS and have two classes from each grade, year 7-10. With year 7 and 8, we're currently working through an introduction to the bible unit and with years 9 and 10 we're tackling a unit about Jesus offering us life, here and now.

As I continue to teach, get to know the staff and student body, could you pray for these things I've outlined here and pray most importantly, that I would be humbly emulating Jesus each day at Ku-Ring-Gai High School."



Fiona Newcombe



Adele Posthuma

### **Turrumurra Christian Education Association (TCEA)**

#### **Fiona Newcombe and Adele Posthuma**

St Swithun's and other local Protestant churches formed Turrumurra Christian Education Association to fund the best possible Christian Special Education programme at Turrumurra High School (THS).

In 2024 Fiona Newcombe and Adele Posthuma shared the teaching position at THS. Having the teachers on site for four days a week leads to stronger relationships with staff and students.

Fiona supports students and staff and reaches out with the good news of the gospel. She has worked as an SRE teach in high schools for the last three years.

Adele comes with a background in running school and youth camps and is now also assisting in youth ministry

## 6.2 Parish Partner—Berkeley Life Centre

This year has been full of generosity by parishioners by way of donations of clothing, groceries, and household items given to the people of Berkeley, as well as prayer for the people who work at Berkeley Life Centre, particularly for those who assist in the running of the Second Chance Op Shop. Our new Berkeley shelves at the back of the church hall were continuously overflowing with good quality donations—so much so that we had to organise trailers to transport the goods to Berkeley. We placed a pause on receiving and delivering donations towards the end of the year due to staff changes at Berkeley and the retirement of the Op Shop

Manager. However we continued to deliver groceries by way of online shopping at the local Coles Supermarket as well as groceries taken directly to Berkeley.



Wayne receiving a load of goods from David Barling and Neil Spencer.

We give special thanks to those who offered their time and vehicles to transport goods to Berkeley including Fran Durand, Robin and Barry Hall, John Fullagar, Neil Spencer, David Barling and Fred and Di Morris. We also thank those people who continue to donate regularly through monetary donations and the Friday Women's Bible Study and Home Groups who contribute to online shopping. The food donations do not last long at the Berkeley end are very gratefully received by local families who find it difficult to provide food for their families due the present high cost of living .

In August a group of 12 people from St Swithun's attended the annual "Light Up Berkeley" event where we heard about the work of the Berkeley Life Centre and the plans for expansion of the Ministry Team there.

Towards the end of the year we learned that the present Senior Minister, Rev Wayne Pickford, was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. This has prompted him to plan his retirement as of mid 2025. We give praise and thanks to Wayne for his remarkable leadership of the church at Berkeley and for his love and care to all those who attend Berkeley Life Centre Church as well as the Berkeley community at large. He will leave very large shoes to fill and we wish him all the best for his retirement and for his continuing health challenges. We know what a strong man of faith he is and he will hold firmly to his continually expressed slogan "Jesus Wins".

We were sad to learn that the long time manager of The Second Chance Op Shop Kay Andover was retiring because of the ill health of her partner. She has been our point of contact for all our dealings with the Op Shop and through her we have built up a good relationship with the team who run the shop. Unfortunately a new manager has not yet been appointed to run the Op Shop which has meant we currently do not have a person to act as our point of contact – so we have temporarily suspended our collecting of second hand clothes, bedding and other household items for the shop. We will resume our collecting as soon as a new manager is appointed. We wish Kay all the best for her retirement and give praise to God for her steadfast management of the Op Shop over many years.



Farewell to Kay (in stripes) our contact and long time manager of the Second Chance Op Shop .

Sharna Phillips  
*St Swithun's/Berkeley Coordinator*



## Safe Ministry Parish Report

### **Incident and Safety Summary**

We are pleased to report that there were no reportable incidents across our ministries at St Swithun's this year. This is a testament to the diligence of our leaders, volunteers, and staff in maintaining a culture of safety and care for all.

### **Summary of Safe Ministry Training Records for the year of this report:**

#### **Working with Children Checks (WWCC)**

Total number of verifications: 14

#### **Safe Ministry Training (SMT) – numbers of people trained during the year:**

Essentials: 4

Refresher: 7

Junior Leaders: 3

#### **Safe Ministry Checks (SMC)**

Total number conducted in the year: 3

#### **Safe Ministry Compliant (as per Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020)**

Number of people in roles requiring WWCC/SMT/SMC at time of report: 52

**Number of those Safe ministry trained: 52**

### **Ongoing Vigilance**

We remain committed to upholding the highest standards of safe ministry. As we move into 2025, we will continue to ensure all volunteers and staff are trained, compliant, and well-supported in their roles. Our **Safe Ministry Sundays**, where volunteers are assisted in completing training together, will continue to be a helpful part of this process.

A strong working relationship between the Safe Ministry Representative and the ministry team will remain a priority to ensure that training requirements and compliance standards are always met.

We thank all those who have taken the time to complete their training and ensure our church remains a safe place for all.

Stuart Holman  
*Senior Minister*

Sarah Hunziker  
*Safe Ministry Representative*





## Synod Report

The second session of the 53rd Synod of Sydney Diocese took place in September 2024, with your Synod representatives again in attendance at the meetings in the Wesley Centre in Pitt St.



This session was special because our own Senior Minister was invited to give a short presentation about us!

Stuart spoke for ten minutes or so about our parish, starting with a description of the focus groups we all participated in when he first joined us through to the formulation of our ministry plan. He described the many and varied activities that take place in our parish, the growth in attendance at each of our services, the youth and children's ministries, the gym and more. His talk was illustrated and included a photo of the choir as part of the PowerPoint presentation. Stuart explained to the 800 or so attendees that the background in the choir photo was not actually St Swithun's but Salisbury Cathedral in case anyone was confused about that!

Stuart's presentation was not boastful but full of good ideas, good humour and gratitude for God's grace to us in Pymble.

Synod gives us the opportunity to be involved in the direction and decisions of the Diocese. For example, amongst the 51 resolutions, 8 ordinances and 2 policies passed at this session, there was a new Diocesan Governance Policy approved after much discussion of a Statement of Organisational Faithfulness and of Personal Faith which will now be required to be signed by the members of the governing body of certain church organisations such as schools, though not by members of school councils who are alumni representatives. Synod affirmed the Christian doctrine of marriage but declined to include a clause about it in the Statement.

Heart-warming moments at this session included:

- a celebration of the provisional parishes of Sussex Inlet and Sadleir moving to full parish status with many of their long term parishioners present for this momentous occasion;
- the establishment of a new position of Director of Indigenous Ministry for the Diocese, and
- continued advocacy for reform in the areas of poker machines and online gambling.

An important debate occurred about church attendance and demographics. Synod resolved that people across the Diocese be asked to “give a special five year focus to respond to our attendance decline, making prayer, evangelism, church health and leadership development our chief priorities.”

A fuller description of the outcomes of this session can be found at this link: <http://tiny.cc/synod2024>

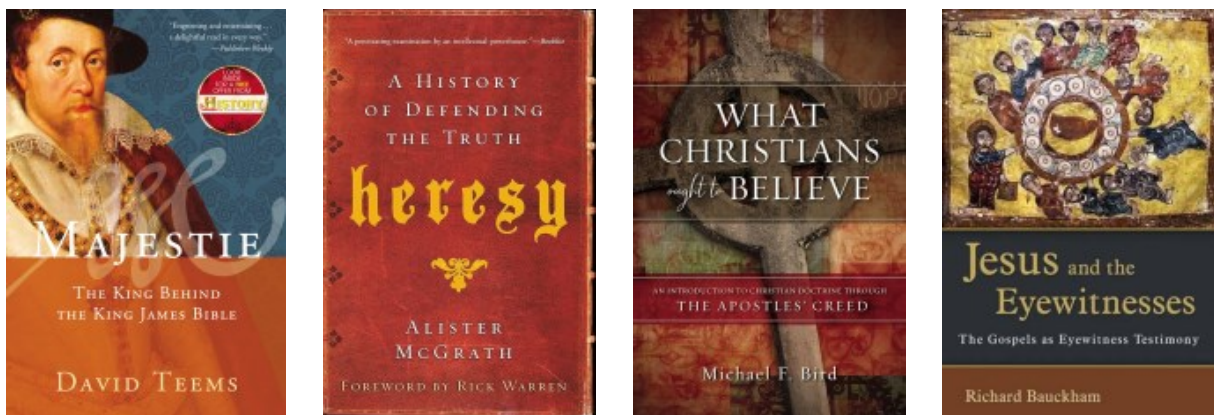
The next session of Synod is due to occur in September 2025.

Pamela Summers  
*Synod Representative*



## Library Report

Each Sunday many of our parishioners walk through the Library in the Pace Centre to indulge in a scrumptious Morning Tea/Coffee. Even though some delight in the neat colourful display of information there are still not many who use this marvellous treasure trove. Over the past two years since its inception the collection has gradually grown. Commentaries are still considered to be the most essential and there are continuing purchases in this area. They are the most borrowed – however, there is a great range of other subjects which are covered dedicated to the strengthening of our faith, to attempting to answer perplexing questions of life, to comforting and encouraging us in our daily journeys and, for just relaxing and enjoying with, for example, history and biographies.



A decided effort is made to obtain current works on the importance of Christianity in today's world whether discussing its untold foundation for present philosophical and political thought or in relating its determined spread to all peoples. There are unexpected tales such as *Majestie*, by David Teems about the Authorised Version of the Bible. King James 1 might be thought to be a strange choice to authorise a translation of the Bible – he was greatly interested in scatology and had some dubious relationships. Even so, “in an effort to pacify rising tensions in the Anglican Church, and to reflect the majesty of his new reign, he spearheaded the most important literary undertaking in Western history – the translation of the Bible into beautiful, lyrical and accessible English.” This book is a delightful easy read full of wit and quotations yet also conspiracy, murder, despair, and loss.

The classification used in the Swiz Library will probably be unfamiliar to users. It is the Pettee system originally devised in the New York Theological Seminary by Julia Pettee (in the 1930s!) Still used, and frequently updated, in a small number of libraries, it classifies all subjects from a theological point of view. A combination of letters and numbers does away with the cumbersome “hard to remember” numbers of the Dewey system for example.



There is a list of the order of the scheme on the east wall and two indices on the library desk – one an expanded Shelf Order (black folder) and the other a Subject Authority File (blue folder) where one can look up a subject name to find the shelf number. Unfortunately, although the books have been entered on the computer, it is not yet possible to use this facility for author searching or library borrowing. Borrowing needs to be entered in the Red Book on the library desk.

Feel free to contact the Librarian at any time for assistance –  
Catherine Halsall  
0401 091717 or [macleodhalsall@gmail.com](mailto:macleodhalsall@gmail.com)



## Ku-Ring-Gai Inter-Church Committee

The Ku-ring-gai Inter- Church committee has met 10 times in the past year. Each meeting opens and closes with prayer led by Committee members on a roster basis.

Member Churches are as follows:

- Corpus Christi Catholic Church, St Ives
- Pymble Catholic Parish
- St Swithun's Anglican Church, Pymble
- St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, St Ives
- St Ives Uniting Church
- Gordon/Pymble Uniting Church
- St Ives Baptist Church
- St John's Anglican Church, Gordon was welcomed back to the Committee.



Former Chairperson, Madeline Forbes has formally retired from the Committee. Charles Parbury has resigned as Joint Chair due to family commitments. Catherine Halsall will join the ongoing Chairperson, Cheryl Doyle as Joint Chair. Annette Burns continues as Secretary.

We have been blessed with the enlightening enthusiasm of Cheryl and the persevering dedication of Annette and are excited with the growth of our group with the two ladies from St John's and a second representative from St Ives Baptist.

The World Day of Prayer Service was prepared by the Women of Palestine but, sadly, it was felt that with the Middle East situation and the multicultural population locally, it would be more sensitive to not hold the Service in St Ives. The Ku-ring-gai Churches were invited to attend a Service held at the Holy Name Catholic Parish in Wahroonga in an individual capacity. This was very well attended with many people from St Swithun's being part of the congregation. Shortly afterwards St Swithun's held a Prayer event for Peace which other Ku-ring-gai Churches were invited to attend.

This year The World Day of Prayer will take place at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, St Ives with the focus being on the Cook Islands.

The Service for the signing of the Agreement between the Ku-ring-gai Churches was held on Tuesday, 14th May at St Swithun's. This was during the Annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the Service was based on the Australian Council of Churches Service. Ann Powell led this gathering, and the Reverend Stuart preached. The event was a notable success with all member churches in attendance and involved in the proceedings. All were greatly impressed with the message and enjoyed significant fellowship afterwards.

We were grateful to Peter Hamilton for not only playing the hymns but also for the sensitive accompaniment during the signing of the Agreement. Gratitude to the WFBS is expressed for the provision of beautiful flowers and for the sumptuous Morning Tea which followed.

It was felt that the Committee needed a social event to replace the Dinner which was, in the past, held in November of each year. St Ives Baptist Church graciously agreed to host a picnic on their lawn on November 3rd. Unfortunately, there were a number of events taking place by our member churches on the same weekend so the gathering was small. Nevertheless, it was a very happy event and those who attended felt it was a really good beginning which was definitely worth repeated annually. It is hoped that this would attract younger church members. A united commitment to taking the gospel to our community is critical.

Ann Powell and Catherine Halsall  
*St Swithun's Representatives KICC*



Members of the Ku-ring-gai Inter- Church committee.

# Treasurer's Report 2024

## Overview

Finances in 2024 were characterised by (1) generally solid income, though offerings, the main component of income, fell short of the budget; and (2) expenditure exceeding the budget, mainly reflecting ministry staffing and property expenses. Funding of the resulting deficit of \$34k saw uncommitted cash levels falling to historically low levels.

During the year, the church continued to draw upon funding from the Swiz Cultural Foundation (SCF), as well as the recently established Swiz Christian Growth & Maturity Trust (SCGMT). The year also saw the winding down of the Provision for Building Maintenance, a provision established arising from the 2022 Building Appeal.

This report should be read in conjunction with the table accompanying this report and the 2024 audited financial accounts.

## Income

Income in 2024 was above budget, reflecting: solid reimbursements from the SCF and the SCGMT; buoyant supplementary service income; and substantial donations. Income from these categories, which in aggregate account for around a quarter of total income were sufficient to more than offset a shortfall in offerings. We are very grateful to the donors of the SCF and the SCGMT for their generosity.

Offerings in 2024, which account for around 70 per cent of income, were below budget, though they firmed as the year progressed. Monthly offerings averaged \$62k, up from \$61k in 2023, but below the budget of \$63k.

## Expenditure

Total expenditure in 2024 was well above budget, mainly reflecting higher than budgeted spending on ministry staffing, as well as on property. The larger than expected spending on ministry staffing was mainly the result of a change in staff housing arrangements.

Above-budget spending on property mainly reflected the substantial refurbishment of the property at 4 Merrivale Road (refer to the property report for details on this project). For much of the year, expenditure on this project was charged to the Provision for Building Maintenance, before being expensed in the latter part of the year through the profit & loss account. Much of the expenditure was funded by (unbudgeted) donations from the SCGMT. Spending on property maintenance, utilities and repairs to the organ (the latter offset by higher reimbursements from the Swiz Cultural Foundation) also contributed to the above-budget expenditure on property.

Other categories of expenditure were either broadly in line with the budget, or the variances were not material.

### The Financial Outlook and the 2025 Budget

The Wardens and Parish Council remain committed to a balanced budget over the medium term, though the need to rebuild cash levels makes budgeting for a surplus in 2025 a priority. The 2025 Budget assumes a surplus of \$16k and is based on a modest increase in offerings.

<b>St Swithun's Anglican Church, Pymble</b>					
<b>Financial Accounts Summary (\$'000)</b>					
	<u>2023</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2024</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2024</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2025</u> <u>Budget</u>	
<b>Income</b>					
A	Offertories & donations	769	818	803	833
	Grants received	33	-	-	-
	Property income	6	7	5	60
	Ministry activities	15	12	18	18
B	Other income	67	200	106	179
	Appeals	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>889</b>	<b>1,036</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>1,091</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
	Ministry staffing	464	541	469	585
	Parish cost recoveries	110	106	106	122
C	Resources for ministry	9	14	9	16
	Donations	30	30	30	30
D	Parish administration	202	215	191	190
E	IT appeal expenditure	2	-	-	-
F	Property expenses	94	145	78	113
	Ministry expenses	25	19	26	19
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>935</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>1,075</b>
<b>Operating surplus (income less expenditure)</b>		<b>(46)</b>	<b>(34)</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>

#### NOTES

- A Includes supplementary service income
- B Includes Swiz Cultural Foundation and Swiz Christian Growth & Maturity Trust reimbursements, as well as interest income
- C Includes supplementary service expenses
- D Includes admin staff salaries, professional services and office expenses
- E Comprises expenditure from IT appeal in 2021
- F Includes the Provision for building maintenance arising from the building appeal in 2022

Numbers may not add due to rounding



### Swiz Cultural Foundation (SCF)

The SCF is a separate entity to St Swithun’s Anglican Church and operates to support music and other cultural activities within the parish. Donations to the Foundation are tax deductible. A record \$140,000 was disbursed during the year for cultural activities. This included funding for a short-term music internship, as well as the upgrading of audio-visual equipment in the church.

A very sincere thank you to those people who have given generously to the Foundation.

Swiz Cultural Foundation (\$)		
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Contributions	136,067	89,961
Disbursements	66,658	140,379
Net movement	69,409	-50,418

### Swiz Christian Growth & Maturity Trust (SCGMT)

The SCGMT was established in 2024 as a separate entity “to promote the Church’s vision of developing healthy disciples of Christ, consistent with the Church’s mission of welcoming, nurturing and serving.....” Donations to the SCGMT are not tax deductible. In the course of the year, the Trust has funded refurbishment of the property at 4 Merrivale Road, as well as the employment of a Youth Worker.

### Special Thanks

I particularly thank David Milling, who brings a high degree of integrity, expertise and wit to managing the financial accounts of the church. David’s contribution to the church extends far beyond what is suggested by the title of ‘bookkeeper’. His substantial contribution to the church is deeply appreciated.

A special thanks is also extended to the team at Swiz’s external auditors, Whittle & Associates, for their assistance and support during the year.

Brett Winton  
*Treasurer*