

**The Methodist Church
Hucclecote**

<http://www.hucclecotemc.org.uk>

**Annual General
Meeting
Sunday 10th May 2026
Following worship
and a Bring & Share Lunch**

Our Vision – An active community of people seeking to follow Jesus and trying to live as God intends, and inviting others to do the same



Minister's Report

Dear Friends,

There is a monument exhibited in the Lerwick Museum, Shetland called 'The Monks Stone' dating to the 'Celtic Christian' movement of the 5-7th centuries. On it are engraved five figures, one is on horseback, and another has a book-satchel possibly containing the Holy Scriptures. Two things strike me. Firstly, these 'saints' do not go it alone. Secondly, they tread water, and the waves are choppy! But no fear, they do not look down at the waves but to the cross which goes before them.

This time last year we were still looking for a lay pastoral assistant and we are grateful to God that we finally found one in Gary who started working with us at the beginning of January. With Gary in place and subsequent to the last Church Council, a steering group has been set up to develop our mission plan which we are calling 'Our Church's Future Story' which we will update the ACM on progress so far.

Other items of interest: I am grateful to Church members for their prayerful support as our sister church at Lonsdale has transitioned to St Oswald's village where we have literally doubled our numbers overnight.

My own situation in terms of stationing still depends on the manse arrangement in the Weston Super Mare Circuit where currently the office study is in one of the upstairs bedrooms. This is a 'no not' according to current guidelines, hence my hesitancy.

One potential development here is through the Gloucester Churches prayer network, I have had initial conversations with Abbie Clarke from Sportily who is a Pilates specialist sports coach. She is looking for church venues to base some of her area work around north Gloucester so Churchdown and Hucclecote have come into the conversation.

Finally and sadly, due to a late withdrawal, the joint Hub service between the three churches at Hillview Primary school will not take

place. Instead Rev Joe Mottram and myself will arrange a joint service for the May 17th at St Philip's and St James in the lead up to Pentecost where according to Acts they were altogether in one place. May the Holy Spirit fall afresh on us in our day and age.

Eastertide greetings, Rev John

Pastoral Worker's Report

Entering HMC and the pastoral community, I found a stable, well-organised pastoral framework already in place, which was so reassuring to see for me stepping into role of Pastoral lay worker. This group has been such a blessing. Overall, there have been very few changes to the pastoral team (aside from myself), and pastoral responsibilities remain consistent. The Pastoral workers (including myself) meet bi-monthly to review community needs.

The most pressing pastoral need is for volunteers to provide lifts to and from church. DBS clearance is required.

I have also been invited to lead a monthly service at a local care home, with our first service held in March 2026.

Pastoral Activities over past few months (in addition to being available to work alongside pastoral workers)

- A weekly walk-in pastoral consultation every Monday, 5–7pm, in the church library. Home visits or meetings elsewhere are also available as needed.
- I have completed all the required safeguarding courses.
- Regular attendance at church activities to build relationships and respond to pastoral needs, including leading Boys' Brigade devotions over Easter. I believe I have visited all of the Church outreach programs and most of the other programs taking place at the church.
- Regular meetings with pastoral and lay workers across the circuit to share support and ideas.

- Representation of the pastoral group on the *Our Church's Future Story* working group, ensuring pastoral input remains active and inclusive.
- Participated in an Easter Ministry @ Roots (Alternative worship style) at St Marks Methodist Church in Cheltenham.
- Taken two church services at HMC.

Anyone with ideas to expand pastoral outreach is encouraged to get in touch by calling me or dropping an email. I will happily engage with you for a good chat. Remember we are all part of the Body Of Christ.

For pastoral contact:

Phone: 07498 478613

Email: pastoral,hucclecote@gloscircuit.com

In conclusion, it is encouraging to see pastoral care happening naturally throughout the congregation. Thank you to all our pastoral workers for their continued dedication—this ministry truly runs day and night.

Gary

From The Pastoral Committee

Pastoral visitors, the majority of which are pastoral stewards, continue to be in contact with their lists providing support as and when required. Church membership and worshipper lists are amended and updated as required.

As previously reported, due to the reduced number of members now able to carry out the role of pastoral visiting, priority for home visits is for those who are unable to attend church for various reasons. Any church members willing to become a pastoral visitor would be very welcome.

We are pleased to welcome our new lay pastor Gary, and look forward to working closely with him regarding his pastoral involvement.

Debbie Long continues to provide details of DBS and safeguarding requirements and also information on refresher training for those who require this.

There are at present four pastoral stewards 10 visitors (which includes the stewards) and the total number of church members stands at 84.

Mary

From the Stewards

Since last writing we have seen Christine Brewster sit down and Lynne Cooke will also sit down from her 8 years' service, the last 4 as senior steward.

As a church we are extremely grateful for their dedication and service.

This leaves Beth; Sylvia and Tim (job-share); and Sue C. We invite others, who are willing and able to commit to service in this way, to come forward and apply to join our team.

Assisting us there are many who, on Sunday mornings and during funerals, are a great and valued help.

Working with Rev. John McNeill, our minister, has proved to be an easy, friendly and rewarding working relationship. We shall miss his gentle and wise guidance when he moves to the Weston Circuit as superintendent.

Over the past year a Worship Group has been formed of those who have an interest in forming and providing worship for Local Arrangement services. This has proved to be a successful way forward and services arranged by this group have been well received.

Recently we have shared breakfasts with the stewards and team at Churchdown taking it in turns to host. These conversations have been valuable in that we have a closer relationship and understanding as to our strengths and weaknesses. As Lonsdale begin their journey at St. Oswalds Village we hope that in time they will be able to join us in this breakfast fellowship

If you are interested in helping to plan our church year, the way forward and are good at working in a team please approach a steward and make yourself known.

Sue

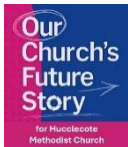
Christmas Tree Festival

I'm pleased to let you know that the Christmas Tree Festival will take place again this year. The theme is The Twelve Days of Christmas, and if anyone would like to take part by decorating a tree, please let me know. I will be looking for volunteers later in the year for the stewarding etc.

Dawn

Our Church's Future Story

Our Minister Rev. Dr John McNeill offered to help us develop a mission plan before he moves to Weston-Super-Mare in August 2026.



He made the offer at the March Church Council meeting and asked for volunteers to join a steering group to develop the plan. This is designed to build on the meeting led by our Circuit Superintendent Rev. Jayne Webb at the end of November 2025, when she encouraged us to think about the future of Hucclecote Methodist Church (HMC).

The current members of the Steering Group are:

Nick Butler, Keith Long, Lynne Cooke, Ron Kasley, Gary Hunter,
Rev Dr John McNeil, Debbie Long and Beth Sweet

The Mission Plan will be helpful to:

- Guide us as a congregation as we plan for the future.
- Demonstrate that we have a plan for the future of Hucclecote Methodist Church when we are applying for grants and any other funding.

The Methodist Church offers material to support a growth planning cycle called Our Church's Future Story. This is an established process which has been used in various churches around the UK. It also builds on the questions which Rev. Jayne asked us to think about late last year.



During the first cycle of the process the listening phase should take about 2 months, the Dream phase about a month and the Choose phase about 3-4 weeks leaving about 8 months to Act before we go around the cycle again (just listening for about a month from now on).

The Steering Group have agreed to call the project 'Our Church's Future Story' because we think that sums up what we are trying to explore. It is also a title which can be understood by people inside and outside the church.

We are thinking about the questions we want to ask and we will give you an update at the General Church Meeting itself. There will also be a chance to ask questions about what it all involves and how you can take part.

We need God's guidance throughout the whole process through the Holy Spirit. One of the first things the Steering Group have agreed is to introduce a regular prayer for our Sunday services, asking God to bless and guide the process and everyone involved in it.

Any sort of listening exercise will only work well if we listen to people inside and outside the church, and we involve as many people as possible.

So as the posters around church say – **What is Our Church's Future Story? Be ready.....We want you to help shape it.**

Nick

Sunday Fun

Sunday fun (formerly called Junior Church) runs from 10.30am on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month for Children of all ages. The team of 8 leaders take turns to lead the sessions, there are always at least two adult leaders.

Junior Church was renamed Sunday Fun at the beginning of the year to see if this would be a more attractive name to increase attendance, so far the attendance numbers have remained between 2 and 4 children of various ages.

During 2025 many of our sessions focused on Creation and our role as Christians to care for the our world and all those in it. We used resources from various Christian websites including The methodist church - “Gifted series”, Christian Aid – “Restore campaign”, Youth for Christ - “The upside down kingdom”, including the topics of the environment, justice, despair and hope, poverty and fairness.

During 2026 we decided to follow the lectionary and have covered Jesus beginning his ministry, Salt and light, the Temptation of Jesus, Jesus and the Samaritan woman, Jesus entry into Jerusalem and the last supper, the Crucifixion and Resurrection. We feel this has been quite successful.

In all our sessions we aim to help to the children to learn about God, Jesus and the bible in a fun, accessible and relevant way. We aim to adapt activities to include our youngest attendee, and also provide a challenge, and new things to think about for the older ones. Our aim is to support them as they explore and develop their Christian faith. Whilst the numbers are low, it is very rewarding to see these children and young people grow in their faith and confidence.

We would like to thank Church members who continue to collect used stamps. These were donated to the Cobalt Unit, who were very grateful for the support.

Ruth

Family Fun

Family fun is a Christian based, 2 hours session along the lines of Messy Church, held during the school holidays. It involved Children and their families in activities, crafts, games, a short worship session in the church, and sharing of food. The initial one, held in Holy week 2025 as a joint BB & junior church event, was very well attended with over 30 children.

During the year 3 more sessions were organised and run with the help of a team over 15 church members. The one in Summer 2025 had the theme of “By the sea” and the stories of Jesus by the sea of Galilee, it was attended by approximately 10 Children. The second was run as part of the Church weekend in November with a focus on Advent. We only had 2 or 3 children attend. The most recent one

was held on the 8th April with the theme of Good News, and was attended by 6 children.

The feedback at each of these events has been that the children enjoyed it and we hope it has a place in their faith journey. The leaders have also had great fun. All the events were advertised to brigades, Jelly Totz and the community, in the same way, however the level of attendance after the first one has been disappointing. The decision has been taken to pause these events. We would like to thank everyone for all their hard work in the planning and preparation, as well as all the helpers for making these events so amazing.

We would also ask that the church would continue to pray with us, for Gods guidance in our outreach to children and young people.

Ruth

Church Flowers

Thank you to everyone for your continued generosity in supporting the Church flowers.

As always the flowers in Church have been lovely, and members of the Church Family who receive the flowers after Sunday Service are delighted with them.

There are several dates available this year because of church family bereavements, so, if you would like to sponsor Church Flowers, especially if you have a special occasion you would like to celebrate please let me know.

Dawn

Handbells

The Handbell Ringers have resumed practice, after a short break for Christmas to enable us to play at the Easter Day Service.

We meet on Tuesday evenings, and are pleased to say, we have a new member, Sheran. We hope you continue to enjoy our playing, even if at times, it's less than perfect.

Dawn

From the Hucclecote Hub

The Hucclecote Hub was set up as a local initiative about 20 years ago as part of the collaboration between Hillview, St Philip & St James and Hucclecote Methodist Church. NOAL - Nativity on a Lorry has been done every year on 2 evenings around the local neighbourhood. Even during Covid restrictions the lorry went out with the cast restricted to 3 households.

In 2025 NOAL went out on 6 evenings in 5 different locations with a number of other churches involved. These included Coopers Edge, Upton St Leonards, Abbeymead, and Coney Hill.

The lorry covers a wide area so 1000's of homes, people in various locations hear about the true story of Christmas.

The Hub is a definite testimony of how Christians from different denominations work together. There is no way one church could do this on their own.

Early planning for NOAL 2026 is already underway.
Keith

"The Chosen" Study Group

We have now completed study of seasons 1-5, which led from Jesus 'collecting' his apostles, to miracles and preaching, right up to the betrayal of Jesus by Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Season 5 was particularly powerful and thought-provoking.

The study meetings for Season 6 - The Crucifixion - will take place in the autumn of 2026.

Interest has been expressed in holding evening sessions to study this inspiring dramatisation, and will begin again from the beginning. If you are interested, please speak to Diana or Elaine & Ron.

Diana

Open the Book

Open the Book is a nationwide project that offers primary school children an opportunity to hear the major stories of the Bible presented through the school year. It is a free service given to each school by a team of Christians from local churches. Each

presentation takes a maximum of 10 minutes and is based on story scripts written by Bob Hartman, who also wrote the Lion Storyteller Bible.

Hucclecote Methodist Church takes Open the Book into Dinglewell Infant School every week. Most weeks there is an opportunity for several children to dress up and take part in the action and there is never a shortage of volunteers! The adult "actors" and prop makers thoroughly enjoy the challenges involved in creating characters such as the giant Goliath, storms at sea, doves, lions and whales. We have developed ingenious ways of hiding the lines we never quite manage to learn. The children are very accepting of our limited skills and seem to enjoy our presentations as much as we do! Open the Book reaches many more children than those who step inside our church, with over 150 children in each weekly assembly.

There are currently 7 members of our team but there is always room for more so if you are interested – and are available on Tuesdays afternoons - please speak to Elaine.

Elaine

Open the Bible

Open the Bible is a small group of people from 3 different churches, Catholic, URC and Methodist who go into 2 primary schools to tell and act out Bible stories. Coopers Edge school have over 400 children gathered in their hall for assembly and we are invited once a month to present a story of our choice. Castle Hill school in Brockworth have about 200 children and we go there twice a term.

It is a good outreach and the children always enjoy our visits. if anyone would like to join us you would be more than welcome, its great fun!

Sylvia

Jellytotz

Jellytotz continues to be a busy service to young mums, grandparents, and childminders. Friendships often develop and our wide selection of toys used and appreciated.

It has been a difficult year, with long-term members leaving to preschool and school. The government now offers some free nursery time from the age of two. So we have become a much younger group.

We continue to offer craft and singing. Recently we have advertised locally in doctors and shops. And our banner brings in new members.

It has been a good year for Mary and I. We want to thank Dawn and Mavis for their support.

Kathy and Mary

Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association

As usual, we have had another busy and successful year. All sections have been working hard to complete badge work, and these will be presented at our annual awards evening on 22nd May at 19:00. All are welcome to attend and celebrate the young people's achievements over the last year.

The Anchor section continues to grow. Their Monday evenings are always energetic, with lots of different games being played. They have also made a variety of crafts throughout the year, and a few examples can be found on their notice board in the fellowship room.

The Junior section has also been busy, completing different badge classes with themes including the Red Arrows, Moses, and the sky and stars. They have also been active in various competitions, including battalion football, the swimming gala, and district sports competitions. In addition, they took part in the Big Sleepover and the International Team Games.

At Christmas, both sections joined together for the final night before the holidays, where we played lots of games and did some crafts. The evening concluded with a visit from Father Christmas.

The Company section has completed badge classes on subjects such as Design Your Own Tartan, Winter Olympics, and Women in Sport.

The Senior section's badge classes have included Unfair Monopoly, It's Good to Talk, and an AI Pictionary race.

Both sections have attended many competitions, including battalion football, the swimming gala, and district sports. We also took part in the national Masterteam competition, finishing 5th overall. The highlight of the year was the national bowling competition, where we won for the second successive year.

As always, we are very grateful for the support we receive from the church family. We have welcomed Gary into all sections, where he has led devotions for us.

The Welcome Café is very popular with our parents on a Monday night. Sally and Lynne do a wonderful job of making everyone feel welcome.

Scott

Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association

Parents & Friends Association

Fundraising for the current year 2025/6 is progressing very well with good amounts raised to date at jumbles sales, Strawberry Fayre and the Christmas Fayre. A cheque was handed to the above organisation at the AGM/Cake and Quiz night in October. Funds raised during the year help the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association officers to provide a varied and interesting programme for the young people.

All events during the past year were well advertised and attracted people not only from Hucclecote, but also from the wider Gloucester community which raises awareness of both the Brigade and church.

We thank the Church Family and our Friends for their continued support.

Mary

Welcome Cafe

The Welcome Café travels from strength to strength. More people are discovering us through the church website.

This is feeding into an interest in our church and more enquiries as to our services.

During our first year, after the pandemic, uptake on Monday evenings and Wednesday morning sessions was slow, serving a faithful few. Now, in 2026 all sessions are lively, well populated and appreciated.

I quote, "Your Café lives up to its name, 'Welcome.'"

We are extremely grateful to Karen, who regularly bakes a large variety of tasty cakes, a generous contribution and donation to our community outreach.

Lately, our fridge and freezer only just managed to support the growing interest. We miss those who have sadly passed on who were stalwart volunteers and bakers.

Please, if you possibly can, bake something for the Café. This will be a valued way of supporting your church outreach. The experience of volunteering is rewarding and uplifting when we interact with those who enjoy the warm, friendly space that we provide for them.

Sue

Lunch Club

We have had another very successful year, with an average of 23 people joining us for Lunch each time. It's a great opportunity to meet together socially with members of the Church family and people from the community. It's also a good opportunity for those who live alone to have a meal together with others. Meals vary from roast, stews and casseroles to old favourites such as Toad in the Hole, the most popular pudding continues to be Crumble and Custard.

Thank you to Elaine for sharing the cooking duties with me, and also to the small team of regular helpers, including Marion who is now able to join us again. We are blessed that everyone is very willing to step in at a moments notice if necessary. We were sad to lose Bev as a cook this year, due to the ill-health of her beloved husband. We send her all our love as she spends precious time with him. Thank you also to Richard, Ron and Roger for collecting some of our less able diners.

This is really an excellent example of everyone working together. If you would like to come along, either as a diner, a cook or a helper, please let me know.

Dawn

Safeguarding

As members and worshippers at Hucclecote Methodist Church, we value every person as part of God's creation. Our community emphasises hospitality and openness, reflecting God's grace and love for all.

We have a wonderful group of Church volunteers. In 2025, six Church volunteers renewed their Disclosure Barring check and a further seven attended the Methodist Church Creating Safer Space training. In 2026 so far, a further eleven Church volunteers have booked to attend safeguarding training sessions. Thank you to those volunteers who have given up their time to complete DBS applications and attend Safeguarding training.

The Hucclecote Methodist Church Safeguarding policy is approved by our Church Council and practices to ensure the safety, health, and wellbeing of Church Members and every person, whatever their age or gender, whether they consider themselves part of the Church or not, to feel confident that Hucclecote Methodist Church is a place they will be safe, valued and protected.

Safeguarding refers to the measures taken to protect individuals, particularly children and vulnerable adults, from harm, abuse, and neglect.

Key Principles of Safeguarding

- **Protection:** Preventing harm, abuse, and neglect by recognising risks and taking appropriate action.
- **Empowerment:** Supporting individuals to make their own choices and have control over their lives.
- **Prevention:** Taking proactive steps to minimise the risk of harm before it occurs.
- **Proportionality:** Responding to safeguarding concerns in a way that is appropriate to the level of risk.

- **Partnership:** Working together with families, professionals, and communities to protect those at risk.
- **Accountability:** Ensuring organisations and individuals are responsible for their actions and decisions regarding safeguarding.

By focusing on safeguarding at Hucclecote Methodist Church, we collectively embrace the responsibility of creating a safer, more inclusive world.

Property

Another challenging year. It takes a lot of time and effort as well as money to keep our premises in the state to which you are all accustomed to. To achieve this the Property & Finance Committee meet as a subcommittee of the Church Council on a bi-monthly basis. New members are always welcome to join from the Church Council.

Over the last twelve months several maintenance tasks have been identified and completed, but by no means a full list e.g.

Flat Roofs: Now completed. Thanks to all those involved, Ron for managing the project on behalf of the Church, Enover for their generous grant.

Church Sign: Has been erected thanks to Peter Shaw and his team.

Electrical Inspection: Completed. New LED lights fitted to Fellowship Room, Kitchen, Main Hall, Lounge, Library and Kitchenette.

WAM Day – 7th June: Thank you to all who took part in helping with cleaning and odd jobs.

Men's Toilets: An upgrade to the plumbing was undertaken.

Emergency Lighting: Inspected and lights replaced thanks to the generosity of Ekes Security.

Decoration: The corridor to the Minister's Vestry was undertaken following the completion of the new roof. Also, the repairs to the ceiling in the Church next to the organ and the wasps nest hole on the opposite side completed.

Lounge: Door replaced from the corridor into the Lounge undertaken by Andy Woodward.

Piano: The old black piano that was not in a fit state to use has been removed thanks to Andy Woodward.

Church Shed: Painted and re roofed.

Audio/Visual Equipment: Some of the cabling in the Church is getting 'tired' and there are new wireless methods of sharing audio/visuals around our buildings. Also, we are investigating providing a monitor for the preacher to be able to follow the service on a screen. Peter Shaw is taking the lead on this.

Heating of The Church Buildings: A survey, offering energy efficiency and zero carbon advice, completed through a site visit in December 2025. The survey was undertaken by Inspired Energy, a local energy consultant that is nationally recognised for working towards net zero with churches and other organisations (*read separate summary*).

To summarise, our buildings are well used and therefore subjected to a lot of wear and tear. The Church has some big questions to consider regarding the future heating of the buildings which, as you

will read in the summary, have large financial implications. Our Minister, John McNeill, has made the point that, in his opinion, there will never be a better time leading up to 2030 to apply for funding to make our Church more environmentally friendly, by moving away from the use of fossil fuels, which should also help to reduce our bills going forward.

Mark

Finance

This report gives the position for the year ended 31st August 2025. As usual, we split the report into two halves. Our General Fund shows the various money given for the work of the church, and the results of our fundraising. This is then used to support the work of the Gloucestershire Circuit, and for all things necessary to keep our premises in good order.

By the year end, we had spent £5,652 more than we received. We had to withdraw this from money held for us at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church. This was a disappointment, as we

Our income held up well. There was a gratifying increase in the collection to £56,774– as always, we're grateful for your support. Much of the collection is Gift Aid claims – if you don't gift aid your weekly offering but would like to, see Ron Keasley.

Other thanks are due to everyone who worked at fundraising events like sales and shows. All the hard work raised £7,157. We are grateful to all the church groups who generously gave £7570 to the church funds. Our other main source of income is from letting our premises. For this, we are indebted to Jane and Andrew Jackson, who cope with all the booking requests, and made £6,604.

The problems were due to extra bills. Mostly this arose from the increase in the share of the circuit costs that we had to bear – up from £57,156 to £63,420. This is an amount that is largely out of our control, but provides essential services to us – including our minister. The other large increase was in building maintenance, with large amounts spent on electrics and plumbing.

Looking forward into this current year, our circuit assessment has gone down – from £63,420 to £58,224, which will ease next year's position. However we face other problems.

We expect an increase in utility bills. Partly this is because, due to problems with their billing system, we only paid a small amount for gas – this windfall is unlikely to happen this year. Also, our fixed-price electric contract expires in June (we were just looking to renew when the Americans intervened), so what the future bills might look like is unclear.

The other uncertainty surrounds the lettings income. We are acquiring new bookings all the time but we are unlikely to achieve last year's total.

Now to the other balances we hold. Most encouragingly, we have kept up our support for outside charities. This list isn't complete, as various church groups give independently. It is encouraging that, with our financial difficulties, we can still look beyond our doors.

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| UKRAINE | 43.00 | |
| GLOUCESTER FEED THE HUNGRY | 250 | |
| AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL | 250 | |
| A ROCHA | 250 | |
| ALL WE CAN | 265 | |
| GLOUCESTER CITY MISSION | 250 | |
| MAGGIES Cheltenham | 120 | |
| SMILE CAFÉ | 120 | |
| ACTION FOT CHILDREN | 360 | |
| CHRISTIAN AID | 300 | |
| EASTER OFFERING | 270 | |
| WATER AID | 10 | |
| MHA | | 228 |

This year we have established a fund for premises improvements. It will receive money earmarked for this purpose, and to make

payments as necessary. Currently, after work on the roofs and the hall, we have £5,000 ready for the next project.

We have money set aside for Outreach, which funds the green displays. This year, we have also used for a new notice-board.

As ever, we are grateful to Andrew and Ron, who help with the processing of the finances.

John

Action for Children

The Methodist Church has been passionate about helping children and families for more than 150 years. Our support helps vulnerable children and young people today, and helps them have a brighter future, by making sure they have somewhere to turn in a crisis.

In 2025, we collectively raised **£1294.48** through the collecting boxes plus a Christmas collection of **£318.91**.

A very big THANK YOU to all our box holders.

Lorraine

All We Can

The Christmas Card Collection for 2025 amounted to £277.25. Other Christmas collections added a further £318.91.

AWC is an important contributor to areas in the world suffering from Natural and other disasters. This is often done through partner charities who are better equipped to provide feet on the ground.

Peter

WaterAid

A small group of ladies from Hucclecote Methodist Church and some from the craft group continue to raise money for WaterAid by making cards and crafting gifts for sale throughout the year. The Easter cards were very popular this time. Sales of jigsaws, framed pictures and bric a brac by Sue Woodward at model railway shows have brought in most of the money and during 2025/26 we have sent £4344, which has been much appreciated by WaterAid.

With the money we have helped to fund projects such as building around 25,000 new latrines in various vulnerable households in Loumana in Burkina Faso, where before they had no access to a toilet and had to use a bush to relieve themselves meaning there was little privacy and safety and also a lack of proper hygiene. Awa, a mother from the village was part of the project to improve access to hygiene and sanitation services in her community, who now have to maintain the latrines themselves to keep their families safe and healthy. She and others are so appreciative of the work WaterAid did to change their lives.

Letters and news of thanks and appreciation are displayed on the WaterAid table or noticeboard in the hall please take a look.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Sylvia

Energy Survey by Inspired Energy

The aim of this survey was to provide advice about making the church more energy efficient, comfortable for continued use, and to move towards net zero.

The change may increase our operating costs (through using more electricity). This could be offset through solar panels and a battery storage system, but this also has a cost.

To decarbonise we need to:

- Become more energy efficient by moving completely to LED lighting, insulating the Church Hall, and improving the insulation of some windows in the church and the Hall
- Replace the gas boiler heating the church with a new electrified heating system (either a heat pump or overhead infrared heaters).
- Replace the gas boiler heating the Welcome with a heat pump for the Welcome and the Lounge, and electric panel heaters for the toilets, the Kitchen and Kitchenette
- Consider moving to a single 100A 3 phase electricity supply (instead of the two we already have) which would save on

standing charges and allow any future solar panel (PV) installation to benefit the whole site

- Explore the options for a PV installation with battery storage to generate some of our own electricity needs

Key Recommendations

We have a clear route to achieve net zero by 2030 in three steps

Stage 1: (within 12 months) Change remaining lights to LED and repair church window winders (to ensure windows shut properly)

Estimated cost £4-5k

Stage 2: (by 2027) Replace church boiler with a suitable electric heating system; secondary glaze the church windows and replace the remaining single glazed windows in the Hall **Estimated cost**

£40-45k

Stage 3: (before 2030) Insulate the cavity walls in the Hall; Replace the gas boiler serving the Welcome build with air to air and electric panel heaters; Install a PV system with battery storage and consider an EV charger **Estimated cost £65-70k**

Conclusion

The process of improving energy efficiency replacing our gas heating and progressing to Net Zero is clearly a major undertaking with significant costs.

There is still a great deal of work to do, But this report has given us an idea of the size and cost of the project and provides the basis for a plan to move towards our goal.

Ron & Nick

Eco Church



The environmental charity A Rocha who administer the Eco Church scheme revised the church survey tool during

2025 so we agreed to start again during the autumn of 2025 in our pursuit of a Silver Eco Church award.

We have made good progress with the survey, and the main area we need to work on now is exploring a more sustainable heating system for the church and the insulation of the church building.

We were pleased to receive a grant from the Bristol Methodist District to conduct an energy survey on all the church buildings. We now understand more clearly our options for a new church heating system, how to improve the energy efficiency of our buildings, and some idea of the costs involved. The biggest decision we need to make as a church is whether we continue to use the church sanctuary mainly on Sundays, or whether we want to use it more regularly throughout the week. This will be discussed as part of the work on *Our Church's Future Story* (see elsewhere in this report). We have also completed the replacement of the remaining flat roofs at church with significantly increased insulation. We are grateful for the grant funding which has helped this from local waste company Enovert.

What are the plans for 2026?

We hope you have noticed how we are updating the material on the Eco Church Noticeboard in the Hall more regularly. If you haven't checked it lately please take a look. One of the main changes in the survey is to encourage individual and corporate action so we want to offer various ways for you to get involved in climate action.

We sent some messages about creation care to our local MPs after a Creationtide service in October last year, and Gloucester MP Alex McIntyre wants to arrange a visit to the church to see what we are doing. We also sent him the green hearts from our Share the Love Tree in the Welcome around Valentine's Day. It was great to see how many people added a heart. Thanks too to those people from church who took part in the Big Plastic Count in March.

We are planning to do a community birdwatch and a butterfly count in and around the Welcome Garden, and to help you use some apps to identify flora and fauna there one Saturday when the Welcome Café is open.

If you have any suggestions for what we can do please let us know. The current members of the Eco Church Working Group are: Nick

Butler, Ron and Elaine Keasley, Peter Shaw and Beth Sweet, **but we are always looking for new members** – how could you help us out?

Nick

A Place To Remember

The church memorial garden is a work in progress and we continue to develop and plant - and weed! It is a beautiful, peaceful spot in which to remember and pray for those we miss. We would encourage church members to visit it, either on a Sunday morning after worship or any time the Welcome Cafe is open.

Diana

Methodist Women in Britain

District and Circuit



Women from across the District and Circuit gathered here, in Hucclecote, last October for a District Creative Day.

Rev. Leonora Wassel, Co-Chair, came for the weekend from Harrowgate and helped to lead us in worship and a workshop. Other tutors travelled from across the District to lead in different craft taster sessions. After a well prepared lunch, served by Sue D and Alison E, we spent time in church circle dancing led by Gillian from Cardiff.

Thank you to everyone who helped the day become such a success. A further Circuit Craft Day is planned for later in the year on demand.

National and Worldwide

MWIB is the British arm of the Global Methodist and United Church Women.

We have a seat at the United Nations and are consulted on many women's issues.

Our vision is that all women will be empowered, encouraged, enabled and equipped to live a life free of injustice and inequality.

Our Mission is to

- raise awareness of issues that affect women across the world
- speak out and be proactive on issues faced by women
- enable and empower women to reach their full potential
- provide opportunities for women to know Christ through conferences, lectures, gatherings and small group activities
- work with other groups for the wellbeing of women throughout the world.

Recently a group from Hucclecote attended the Annual Conference, held in Swanwick, Derbyshire, over a weekend. Together with women from across the country and beyond we engaged in workshops, study, challenges, worship and dancing. The weekend was packed full with fun, laughter and fellowship.

Conferences, webinars, lectures and workshops are all available on the MWiB YouTube channel.

Prayers, worship resources, grants and more information is available on the website

www.mwib.org.uk or you could ask me.

Sue

Craft Group

We have 29 members, we meet every Thursday between 10am and noon.

We are knitting blankets for Brockworth house . Also knitting blankets and hat for the special care baby unit. We have our annual Christmas fayre which is on the 21st November 2026, we are also supporting the Christmas tree festival.

Lynne

Friendship Club

Our Friendship club normally meets at 2.30pm on the 2nd Monday of the month. We have 31 members and most months we get around 24 ladies at our meetings.

We've had a good year, starting with our Easter devotions led by Jenny Jackson. We've had games afternoons, beetle drives, talks from Kate Peake & Stuart Mitchell. We've had tea & cake of course and enjoyed our Christmas lunch with lovely music from Andrew.

We finished our year with Easter devotions – quite early this year – with John Rainbow.

We raised £164 for our charities. This year we chose The Cobalt Unit & James Hopkins Trust.

Sadly, we recently lost Maureen Roberts. We will miss her.

We would welcome new members. We really are a Friendly group.

Helen

Mens' Social

We have now been running for just over 2 years. Our meeting is on the 2nd Tuesday each month, except for August. Regular numbers vary between 12-18.

Sadley, during the year, we have lost Len Horwood at the age of 93.

We meet at 10am for 2 hours, starting with a chat over coffee and biscuits. This would normally be followed by a speaker or other activity, such as table games (shove halfpenny/bagatelle). Speakers have ranged from; Protate Cancer Support Group, Soldiers of Gloucester Museum, Ukraine Supplies Delivery, Coney Hill and many others.

Our December meeting was a Christmas lunch at the Wagon and Horses where 24 attended.

The format seems to be well received and we have all benefitted from getting to know more about each other, resulting in friendships rather than passing acquaintances.

The meeting is intended not just for those attending HMC, but also friends and anyone else from the community.

Peter

Ladies' Lunch

We had a very successful and enjoyable lunch in October 2025 at The Wagon & Horses, with a good turnout of ladies from church. The next lunch is planned for the end of May 2026, again at The Wagon & Horses.

Diana

Badminton Club

We now meet on Monday mornings 9.30 – 11.30. The number of our players – ladies and gentlemen – increases, and we welcome anyone who wants to join us. We don't have any skill level qualification – our matches are strictly for fun. And between games we always have time for refreshments and a chat!

Andrew

Welcome Garden

Summer 2025 was a challenge for all gardeners because of the hot, dry weather. Runner beans and squashes did not do as well as in previous years, especially because we only manage to water our vegetables twice weekly. Nevertheless, we were able to share our rhubarb, onions, broad beans and potato harvest with our Friday Lunch Club and the Gloucester Windrush Meal Venture, who deliver a cooked meal to around 90 people every week. Runner beans really struggled in the heat but we shared the small harvest with the St Oswald's Food Hub.

When autumn came we sowed broad beans, swede and cabbages and planted onion sets which are slowly growing through the winter and will be ready to harvest in the late spring. In February we had a delivery of spent mushroom compost to top up the remaining empty beds. We are grateful to several of the Men's Group who came along to help with the shovelling. It was a great relief to all that it wasn't raining like last year!

Over the winter (25/26) we have spent a few really wet or freezing Wednesday mornings in the café planning what we are going to grow in 2026. We are not put off by gentle drizzle so, through the autumn and winter, have trimmed hedges around the church grounds and finished laying the hedge behind the kitchen. Laying a hedge reduces the height, making ongoing management much easier, and makes a better habitat for birds to nest. We were thrilled to find 2 nests in the section of the hedge that had been laid last winter. Having produced so much woody waste we have spent many hours chopping it up – by hand, with an electric shredder and a mower to reduce the volume for the green bin. We are all looking forward to sowing and planting in the spring!

The greenhouse, that was so kindly donated to us, is still waiting to be glazed. Removing the old rubber sealing strip and fitting the new has proved to be a very fiddly job – especially in cold weather – so work will start on it again in the warmer weather. We have several volunteers from the Men's Group to help with this.

We are always happy to show people around the Welcome Garden on Wednesday mornings and welcome anyone (church member or not) to join our team.

Elaine