



St. Mark's, Smiths Parish
Annual Reports
2024/25



St. Mark's Anglican Church
The Rev'd. Canon John Stow ~ Priest-in-charge
Rev'd Gavin Tyte ~ Associate Priest

Dear Members of St. Mark's Anglican Church,

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

Please be advised that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of St. Mark's Anglican Church will take place on **Sunday, 18th May 2025 following the 9.30 a.m. service**. Your participation in this important meeting will be most welcomed.

As is our practice we are publishing the reports in advance. By making this information available to members in advance, we aim to achieve two goals. By informing you of our progress during the year you should be able to come to the meeting prepared to engage in meaningful discussion. Also, by giving members the opportunity to read this material in advance, we can hopefully eliminate the time-consuming reading aloud of all of the reports. The time saved can then be put to better use in looking forward and planning for our future growth. The Treasurer's Report along with the Unaudited Financial Statements, which take longer to prepare and audit, will be presented at the meeting and finalized at a later date.

We welcome you as a member to take part and to make this AGM a dynamic and positive event.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Campbell, Vestry Clerk

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS REPORT

You'll see from the contributions to this Annual Report that St Mark's has continued to thrive this past year, thanks to the leadership of our parish priest Rev Gav. Our thanks go to him and to Helen for their massive achievements.

Gav is far more than the 'Associate Priest' of his formal job title. In addition to being the helmsman at St Mark's, he has strengthened and inspired the shared Ministry Team, first with Hamilton Parish alongside and for the last three years with St George's in tow also, especially in the support of new ministries.

There will be opportunity in due course to thank Gav and Helen when it gets nearer their time to leave. Meanwhile, the search committee has begun the work of finding a successor.

The recent survey of our members has provided a strong mandate to continue in the direction Gav has set, for St Mark's to reach out with love and care to the community around it, offering sound Christian teaching, expressing vibrant worship and sharing warm fellowship, that all incorporate families with children.

For this challenge, your time and talents as members of St Mark's will be as vital as ever. I look forward to our supporting Gav and Helen as this chapter of their ministry evolves into the next, and to working with you all on our way forward at St Mark's.

Respectfully submitted, Canon John Stow, Priest-in-Charge

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025
Sunday, 18th May 2025

AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer
2. Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting
3. Reports:
 - Associate Priest's Report
 - St. Mark's Church Guild Report
 - Children & Families Committee Report
 - Property & Infrastructure Committee Report
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Graves Committee Report
 - Synod Report
4. Unaudited Financial Statements
5. Appointment of Auditor
6. Report of Nominating Committee
7. Election of Churchwardens
8. Election of Vestry Members
9. Election of Synod Representatives
10. Any other business

MINUTES OF THE ST. MARK'S CHURCH AGM AT THE PARISH HALL

11am on Sunday, 19th May 2024

Chair: Canon John Stow (Priest-in-Charge)

Attendees: as per the sign in sheet. There were 42 members signed in out of 109 registered members in attendance.

Apologies: Leta Woolridge, Bob and Jeanie Flath

Minutes Secretary: Helen Tyte.

1. Opening Prayer and Apologies

1.1 Opening Prayer

Canon John opened the meeting in prayer at 11.03am. He then presented Fr. Don Moore with a basket of goodies in recognition of his 93rd birthday on 23rd May.

1.2 Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Minutes of the Previous AGM

2.1 Consider and Approve the Minutes of the 2023 AGM

Peter Nash proposed the minutes from 11am on Sunday 21st May 2023 and Helen Campbell seconded. All in attendance were in agreement.

2.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 2023 AGM

There were no matters arising.

3. Annual Reports

The 2023/2024 annual reports listed below were circulated to all members prior to the AGM.

- Associate Priest's Report
- Churchwardens' Report
- St Mark's Church Guild Report
- Children and Families Committee Report
- Property and Infrastructure Committee Report
- Business and Finance Committee Report
- Graves Committee Report
- Synod Report

3.1 Thanks to Those who Submitted Reports

Canon John gave his report in person and a copy of this can be found at the end of these minutes.

Canon John thanked those that had contributed to the Annual Reports.

3.2 Consider the Annual Reports

Each report was considered individually, and people were invited to ask questions of those who had compiled them.

Canon John expressed his appreciation of the Guild, and indicated that Holy Trinity Church were hoping to revive their Guild after seeing the strength and effectiveness of the Guild at St. Mark's Church.

Carys reminded the meeting of the gifts that were donated to the MAWI patients at Christmas, and expressed her thanks for the generous donations that are always gratefully received. This information could be added to the Children and Families Committee report in the future as community outreach.

3.3 Approve the Annual Reports

Dudley Cottingham proposed that all of the reports be accepted and Mark Moffat seconded. All in attendance were in agreement.

4. Unaudited Financial Statements

The unaudited financial statements for St Mark's Church for the year ending 31st March 2024 were circulated to members at the AGM and are available alongside these minutes. Mark Moffat read his report in person to those present, a copy of which was also distributed at the meeting and is available in addition to these minutes.

Dudley reminded the meeting that the Church cannot be financially sustainable if it continues to run at a loss and called on those present to increase their giving.

Mark said that continuing to grow the congregation would also provide financial help.

Peter Nash suggested that members of the congregation, or those who have been a part of St. Mark's Church, may be asked to include the church in their wills.

Lisa-Dawn thanked those who had supported the various church fundraising activities throughout the year. She also said that there is a schedule for works for the buildings which will be costed out.

Nicki Horan explained that the church building, cottages, hall, kitchen, and graveyard are all revenue streams that need to be maintained to provide future income. Nicki also reminded the meeting that some of the works could be carried out by volunteers.

Lisa-Dawn explained that there would be invitations for volunteers to join future working parties to tackle certain repair jobs and reduce the amount that we need to spend on labour costs.

Carys asked if financial donations had dropped since introducing online payments, and Mark told the meeting that physical donations dropped, but online giving increased at the time of the introduction of online payments. Unfortunately pledges have fallen over the last year.

Dudley thanked Peter Nash for his work with regards to the graveyard.

Peter Nash explained that one gentleman had paid a lump sum into his grave account to cover costs in advance and he asked Mark to make sure these would be protected.

Lisa-Dawn told the meeting that holding a church capital campaign could lower the debt and help progress the mission and ministry of the church.

Dudley explained that the overall figures showed a \$90k loss from last year's report.

Canon John thanked Mark for his report, and thanked those who contributed comments to be considered. The financial statements will be audited by Norris Ebbin and will be presented later in the summer.

Dudley proposed to accept the Treasurer's Report and the Financial Statement, and Peter Nash seconded. All in attendance were in agreement.

5. Appointment of an Auditor

5.1 Auditor 2023/2024

Dudley thanked Mark and Norris for their hard work from 2023 to 2024.

5.2 Appointment of Norris Ebbin as Auditor 2024/2025

Norris Ebbin stated that he is willing to continue as St Mark's Auditor for 2024/25. This was proposed by Mark Moffat and seconded by Dudley. All in attendance agreed.

6. Report of Nominating Committee

6.1 Submission of the Report

The report of the Chairman of the Nominating Committee was submitted by the Committee Chair, Dudley Cottingham. Nicki (churchwarden) and Vernon Douglas (representative of the congregation) were also part of the committee, and Dudley thanked them for being dedicated to the nominations committee, alongside Canon John and Fr. Gavin.

Dudley thanked Janet Dublin for her long service as Church Warden and as President of the Guild. Pansy Nichols and Paul Gilmour were also thanked for their dedicated work on the Vestry over the last three years. Chris Venter was thanked for his work on the Vestry whilst he was a member.

Dudley thanked all those current Vestry members who have agreed to stay on and thanked Nicki Horan for agreeing to remain in post as Churchwarden. Dudley also thanked Lisa-Dawn Johnston for all of her hard work as deputy Churchwarden and for agreeing to stand as Churchwarden at this election.

Dudley read out the nominations for 2024, and recommended that the members vote in agreement.

6.2 Chair of the Nominations Committee

Canon John thanked Dudley for all his hard work as the chair of the nominations committee, and for his report.

6.3 Thanks and Presentation of Gifts to Outgoing Vestry Members

Canon John and Fr. Gavin thanked the outgoing members for their work on the Vestry. Pansy and Paul were presented with a gift from the congregation.

6.4 Thanks to the Vestry for their Contributions

The Vestry were thanked for their ongoing contributions.

7. Election of Churchwardens/Vestry Members

Lisa-Dawn Johnston has been nominated for the position of churchwarden.

Gabriel Cabrall, Penny Henry, Bob Flath and Geoff Robinson have all been nominated for positions on the Vestry.

A reminder was made that Vestry members are elected annually and are 'retired' after three years. Members do not have to commit to the full three years.

Peter Nash proposed to accept the nominations committee proposals and re-elect all current Vestry members and Nicki Horan as Churchwarden, and elect those nominated as Churchwarden, and new Vestry members. Pansy Nichols seconded and all present were in agreement.

Canon John congratulated the newly elected Vestry and Churchwardens, and welcomed the new members.

8. Election of Synod Representatives
This will take place at the next Vestry meeting.

9. Any Other Business

Peter Nash expressed his thanks to Fr. Gavin and Helen Tyte for all their efforts in growing and maintaining the church.

Dudley thanked Helen Tyte for being the recording secretary.

Nicki thanked Helen Tyte, Fr. Gavin, Canon John, Lisa-Dawn, the Guild and all the key members of the congregation who contribute to the day-to-day running of St. Mark's Church.

Pansy thanked Keith DeSilva for his continued support of the church through the car boot sales and other fundraising events.

10. Date of the Next Meeting

The next AGM will take place in 2025.

11. Closing

Fr. Gavin spoke to the meeting and expressed how he felt that each member of the congregation is like family to him, and that we cannot run the church without each other.

Fr. Gavin thanked Helen Tyte, Lisa-Dawn and Nicki for making his job easier by supporting him. He also thanked Fr. Don for his constant support and encouragement. He informed the meeting that all of the Vestry members have been amazing, and that he feels that this is the best church of which he has ever been a part.

Fr. Gavin recognised that the coming year would be difficult as the buildings need lots of repairs, but we also need to look carefully at how we continue our mission and ministry within Smith's Parish. Fr. Gavin stated that he would appreciate volunteers to open the church throughout the week to allow visitors to see inside the building whilst it is 'staffed'. Anybody wishing to open the church to pray or work from there should contact Fr. Gavin.

He thanked Helen Campbell for being the Vestry Clerk and for collating the reports for the AGM.

Fr. Gavin went on to thank his colleagues on the East End Ministry Team, including Canon John, Marie Loewen, Terry Hassell, Anne Hines, Jenny Hodgkins, and Jennie Foster-Skelton.

Fr. Gavin explained that the Church Partnership Group needs a volunteer to join them in steering the future of the East End churches. This is especially important as they consider a new minister for St. George and St. David's. He encouraged anybody interested in being a part of this group to contact him in person.

Fr. Don proposed applause to show appreciation for the leadership of the church.

Fr. Gavin thanked those who volunteer on the Junior Church team, Annie for the flowers and Paul Gilmor for refilling the candles and all of the other work that he does to prepare the building, alongside all of those who help with the running of the church.

Fr. Gavin closed the meeting in prayer at 12pm.

Respectfully submitted by Helen Tyte

DATE: 19th May 2024

Additions Follow:

St Mark's Annual Meeting, 19th May 2024

Canon John's introduction to the Ministry / Clergy report (given in person at the AGM).

In 2019, St Mark's had a very thorough and widely shared soul-searching, about what kind of a church we wanted to become, and what kind of leadership we should look for to help us to get there. We reached a common mind that we wanted to grow in numbers and in faith; to offer joyful, vibrant worship; to be open and welcoming to all-comers; and to connect strongly with our local community. The fact that a good many of you today weren't here five years ago shows that we have started to grow, and the hopes expressed then are being fulfilled!

Our worship is lively and engaging, and fun for families and children; our membership reflects a broad diversity; and St Mark's is having an increasingly positive impact in a changing community.

We have our good God to thank for this, and for the way He has worked through everybody here. Particularly, He's doing this through Gavin and Helen's visionary and faithful leadership, through the diligent hard work of the Vestry and Guild, and the warm and welcoming fellowship of the Church membership.

As you see from the Report prepared for you today, written by a great many contributors, we have so much to be grateful for! To Gavin and Helen and to each of you, I give my fulsome support and appreciation.

Treasurer's Report – Year Ended March 31, 2024

I would like to start my comments by extending a great thank you to members of the finance committee and property committee for all of their hard work during the year. It has made my job significantly easier. I would also like to thank all of the members that have converted to on-line payments as this greatly reduces the work load involved with making up the weekly deposits. The 'pay down the debt' program continues to be very successful with \$36,397 being paid off against the loan payable.

2024 has been a challenging year - a year of decreasing revenues and increasing costs while reducing our liabilities by over \$58,000. The statement of operations had an operating loss of \$47,221 compared to an operating profit of \$20,115 in 2023. Cash and Cash Equivalents have decreased from \$128,161 in 2023 to \$66,655 in 2024. Current Liabilities have decreased from \$188,806 in 2023 to \$173,343 in 2024 and the long-term portion of the loan payable has decreased from \$193,896 in 2023 to \$161,613 in 2024. The loan payable will be fully paid off on or before November of 2029.

Total Revenues have decreased 5.7% from \$377,833 in 2023 to \$355,970 in 2024 due mainly to reduced rental income. Operating expenses have increased 12.7% from \$357,718 in 2023 to \$403,191 in 2024 due mainly to increased Rector stipend and benefits and increased repairs and maintenance.

The net result of all of this is a decrease in our cash reserves from \$128,161 in 2023 to \$66,655 in 2024.

With operating costs expected to continually increase, it is imperative that we continue to increase our congregation, maintain tight controls on spending and pay off our long-term debt.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Moffat, CPA, CA



ASSOCIATE PRIEST'S REPORT

For the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

As you are no doubt aware, Helen and I have handed in our notice as the Associate Priest at St. Mark's Church. I say Helen and I, because from the very start we have both been fully involved in the mission and ministry of the church. We have given St. Mark's everything we had to give in terms of our times and talents, our remit to turn the fortunes of the church around, to attract a younger membership, and introduce modern, contemporary music and liturgy.

We arrived two weeks before the first Covid lockdown in April 2020, during which we were in quarantine at The Rectory. This meant we were unable to meet members of the congregation and went immediately into delivering online worship. During this first lockdown we recorded the St. Mark's organ and Peter and Angie recorded some hymns. I used covers of worship songs that I had produced and our online worship was a great success. Highlights for me was one member forgetting she was 'turned on' and swearing into her microphone, and Canon John giving a blessing and sending lit candles flying across his office! During this first lockdown we also produced seven full episodes of BLAST!, a video magazine show for our children and young people.

During the Covid years we produced creative church worship and video sermons filmed in different locations. Alongside this I produced 75 Bible study videos and other special videos to keep us encouraged. It wasn't until July 2020 that the first lockdown eventually opened up and we were allowed in-person worship. We also recorded our first music video — the hymn Holy, Holy, Holy (to a backing beat of course). At the time of writing we have published 392 videos on YouTube and some of our current congregation members found us through our music videos posted on social media! Some of the highlights include Remembrance Sunday where on one occasion I transported myself from the Bermuda cenotaph to the one in London, and on another I transported myself from a magic portal in the vestry to the cathedral with one of our children, after worship, desperate for me to show them how the portal worked! I have also loved creativity in worship, such as cooking fish on a BBQ on the church steps to retell the story of Peter meeting the risen Christ, tossing chocolate during our Easter Worship to celebrate the abundance of God, or spraying the congregation with holy water at baptisms to remind us of our own baptism.

Talking of worship, we have produced 43 backing tracks (67 if you count the variations) and written our own worship songs including Angie's wonderful 'Rainbow Voices'. Early on in our tenure, our vestry voted unanimously to be an inclusive church where members of the LGBTQ+ community would find welcome and acceptance, and I am proud that St. Mark's has become a safe place for those that had previously been rejected from worshipping their Lord.

Covid gave us an excuse to move from hymn books to projected worship. We introduced a simpler, accessible liturgy, and we also moved the time of our worship to 9.30am to better fit with families with young children, and to enable us to share ministry across the East End churches. We ensured that every Sunday there would be something for children and fell into the pattern of worship we now enjoy. At this year's Easter Sunday worship, falling outside of school holidays, we had fifty children in attendance and only one of them was not 'one of ours'. How amazing is that!? Helen took to baking fresh bread for our Sunday worship (a tradition that goes back centuries at St. Mark's) and it has been wonderful to break open a warm loaf on a Sunday morning — a real treat for our senses that invokes the warmth and abundance of God.

In terms of church financials, we find ourselves again struggling, due to lack of tenants in the hall and one of the cottages, and the soaring cost of specialist repairs and maintenance, however, during our tenure, we did manage to renegotiate the rate of interest on our loan and significantly down our debt.

Covid saw us providing care packages and grocery cards, along with Christmas hampers, which soon developed into the Lord's Larder grocery bag scheme, which then, due to a lack of demand, reduced to a frozen meal delivery service, which is still operating today.

In terms of heritage highlights, under the guidance of Colin Campbell and Geoff Rothwell, we are blessed to have one of the original 17th century tables lovingly restored and returned to the church. They also restored the rood screen back to its crenelated state and widened the aperture. These two improvements have enabled the priest(s) to celebrate much closer to the congregation and also be more visible. Our small choir has grown from 5 to 16 members, and we have installed a sound system and a rear TV screen to enhance our delivery of worship.

Between November 2021 and December 2024, every Saturday, I wrote a column for the Royal gazette producing over 150 articles over a three year period — including every vacation time we were off or away. I built and maintained a website and social media channels for St. Mark's including utilising WhatsApp groups to help us stay connected. Talking of staying connected, our weekly bulletin, produced by Peter Nash, morphed into Stay Connected, which gets emailed every week, and paper copies still get hand-delivered to 11 parishioners. Over several months in 2023 and 2024 I designed and built the diocesan website and we moved our St. Mark's website over to this platform.

In terms of ministry to children, for Junior Church, we now have three separate groups with a staffing rota. Helen, and her team has organised light parties and tour-and-treats at Halloween, kids takeovers of Sunday worship, Christmas discos, and a fundraiser for charity.

On Thursday evenings we started a Supper Club for people that find themselves on their own or at a loose end. It started with Peter Nash joining us for supper after a choir practice and now has 24 members. As I type this we have 16 coming for Supper Club this evening. We also instigated a monthly Bereavement Support Tea, and it has proved important to hold to hold this space open for those that need it.

This is all on top of seeing the church start our first life-group, senior Christmas lunches, Lent courses, occasional offices such as funerals and weddings, and covering worship at other churches and events. The past five years have been full and exciting!

So what's next for St. Mark's? It's probably not for me to say, save that I think it will involve St. Mark's gathering around some kind of community purpose or mission. A new kind of leadership will be required for this to happen, someone or a couple that can help St. Mark's be outward looking, be an enabler and supporter of gifts and talents, and who listens to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Helen and I have loved every moment of serving this church, and it is, without a doubt, the most wonderful church community of which we have been a part. We count many of you, not as just members of the congregation, but as our dear friends. We will miss you very much, and we thank you all, from the bottom of our hearts, for helping make our stay here so memorable. Although we move on to the next chapter of our lives, we will, of course, stay in touch, and we will no doubt be back for regular visits if you will give us a couch on which to sleep.

We are excited about the future of St. Mark's because of who you are in Christ and because 'we are not just a church, but a family'.

Rev Gav, May 2025



ST. MARK'S CHURCH GUILD REPORT

For period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

ST. MARK'S GUILD plays a very important role in the life of the church and has been in existence since 1944. Our members are very dedicated, and membership comprises of several honorary members and approximately 12 Active Members. We invite any member of our church to join us in this fulfilling Ministry.

On April 28 2024, our Guild celebrated its 80th Anniversary. This occasion was marked with hosting our Annual Guild Anniversary Church Service and Tea. The service was held at 3:00pm and led by Rev. Gavin Tyte with Rev. Marie Quinn Loewen from St. George's Parish as our Guest Speaker. Based on Rev. Marie's talk, two scripture readings were selected. Nehemiah 8, 8-10 and Luke 10, 38-42, read by Lisa-Dawn and Jane Bielby respectively. Introduction was done by yours truly and thank you by Past President Janet Dublin. Thanks to Peter Nash a great supporter of the Guild, who prepared our beautiful programs, and Demara Maybury for singing her Award-winning song. Thank you also to our choir and organist Angie, who led the congregation in some very uplifting hymns concluding with a rousing rendition of 'Oh Happy Day'. This event concluded with an afternoon tea hosted by the Guild and held in the Church Hall. Thanks to Vernon Douglas for entertaining us on the piano and our Sister Guild Members for their support. Eighty-one persons attended, with seventy-seven for Tea. Special thanks to Annie for the beautiful floral table arrangements.

On May 5 2024, the Guild held its monthly meeting at John Smiths Beach with President Pansy providing breakfast. It was suggested to have this event annually.

On June 23 2024, the Guild hosted our annual Seniors Appreciation Lunch in the Church Hall at 12:00pm. We had the privilege of catering to approximately thirty Seniors including St. Mark's members and guests. This event was enjoyed by everyone. We were entertained by our very own Vernon Douglas on the piano and a Liturgical dance was performed by Janet's niece. Members of the Guild catered and served the delicious meal. Treat bags for each attendee were donated by Kalreeta Steede.

The Guild's Annual General Meeting was held on October 6 2024, followed by the regular monthly meeting. There being no new nominations, the existing executive agreed to continue serving.

President: Pansy Nichols, Secretary: Barbara Willis, Treasurer: Evette Smith

Evette Smith and Eldon Steede continued to be our representatives at the Diocesan Guild.

A Tea and Hat Show featuring Edna Bean's extensive hat collection was held on Saturday October 19, 2024. Sixty persons attended, with the ladies of the Guild modeling some very elegant hats.

On Sunday November 17 2024, several of our members attended the Diocesan Guild's Thanksgiving service and tea at the Cathedral. St. Mark's donated a fruit platter, and took a basket of non-perishable food items to be blessed. This was donated to Summerhaven Residential Home.

On Sunday November 24 2024, the Guild presented a contribution to the Sunday School's collection for the Syakwazi Children's home in South Africa.

The Guild held its annual Christmas Tree Trimming and Christmas party with carol singing on Friday December 6, 2024.

A Spaghetti Supper and Bingo was held on February 15, 2025. This event proved to be very successful with about 100 persons in attendance.

Our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper family night took place on March 4 2025, with approximately 80 in attendance. A fun evening was enjoyed by all including a delicious meal followed by games with lots of great prizes.

International Women's Day was observed on Sunday March 9 2025, during our 9:30am Service, with our very own Helen Tyte as Guest Speaker. This year's theme was 'Accelerate Action for Gender Equality'. Helen was introduced by Kayah Sainsbury and thanked by Amiah Cabrall.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of St. Mark's Guild for all their hard work and commitment throughout the year, in making all these projects a success.

Respectfully submitted,
Pansy Nichols, Guild President



CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMITTEE REPORT

For period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

This committee encompasses pastoral matters, the Lord's Larder scheme, and Junior Church.

Lord's Larder Scheme

- During 2024 we continued to support families in Smith's and Hamilton parishes through the Lord's Larder Scheme. During the past year we gave out basic store cupboard items to numerous families when we learned of their need. These were collected from the Rectory or delivered directly to them by our volunteers. The food bank, housed at the Rectory, continues to receive food donations from Lindo's Devonshire and BGA, although these are often items that are past their 'best before date'. We also share these goods with the Lighthouse and Summerhaven care homes. Collecting and sharing these items stops them from being thrown into landfill, and goes a small way towards reducing food waste in Bermuda.
- In addition to the occasional grocery assistance, we continued our weekly deliveries of frozen meals. These are prepared and cooked by me and members of the congregation and stored in the freezer at the Parish Hall. Volunteers have access to the meals whenever people need them, including when members of the congregation are ill and need the comfort of a healthy, home-cooked meal that they do not need to prepare! To help with recycling, the volunteers who deliver the meals exchange the same number of empty food containers for full ones, and the empties are sanitised in the Rectory dishwasher before being reused. This has worked really well, and the meals continue to be well-received. Pansy Nichols and I monitor the dates of the meals to make sure they are donated to the families within three months of them being frozen.

- In September, we lost all power to the hall because of a hurricane. The power outage lasted for numerous days, and the frozen meals began to thaw. Rather than these being wasted, we were able to donate them to the Eliza Dolittle charity, who were best-placed to donate them directly to those in need across the whole island.
- From November 2024, we have received an anonymous monthly donation of \$500 towards the work of the LL.
- To continue throughout the coming year, the scheme needs donations of fresh produce that can be made into soups, curries etc. We currently receive donations for this from Amaral's Farm, Windybank Farm, and Arnold's Markets.
- In December, we again distributed Christmas hampers to local families, using donations from the congregation and turkeys donated by Dunkley's Dairy. We also made Christmas food donations to the residents of the Lighthouse Home, and a hamper of toiletries and other items was delivered to Summer Haven Care Home.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has supported the Lord's Larder Scheme, those who have donated groceries, funds, or time. Goods can be placed in the collection box in the church porch, handed to me in person, or left at the Rectory. Financial donations are also always appreciated.

Junior Church

- The Junior Church at St. Mark's has continued to grow and thrive over the last year. We have three groups that meet in the parish hall after attending the first half of the Sunday service. There is a blanket and toys for the crèche (three years old and under) to use, and a youth group for those aged ten and over. The middle group covers children from four to nine years old, and follows planning created by me based on resources from Scripture Union. Leaders are presented with a rota at the beginning of the year which is updated regularly to reflect changes in our volunteers' schedules. The planning encompasses a Bible story and activities based on that week's theme.
- Following requests made by parents, it was agreed that we would provide Junior Church sessions during school holidays when, previously, the children had been in church for the whole service. The Junior Church leaders now take the children out for social sessions, where they play games and do a variety of craft activities which are not 'formally' planned.
- There is a WhatsApp group dedicated to Junior Church that all leaders and helpers are on, where we share rotas and planning.
- During the year, three leaders have stepped back from Junior Church due to personal circumstances, and they have been replaced by two new volunteers.
- Volunteers are always needed, so please do offer to help if you are able. You are not expected to attend every week, but any extra help is always appreciated. Anybody helping with Junior Church must have SCARs training.
- The Junior Church cupboard was painted by Bob Flath and secured by the Property and Infrastructure Committee. We now have locks to keep our resources safe when the hall is rented out to other users. The resources were sorted and tidied, and any missing items were replaced.
- In May and November we staged 'Kids Takeovers', where the children lead the whole service including the prayers, songs and sermon. Donations totalling \$1559 were made at the

November takeover and these funds were sent to Syakwazi, a charity in South Africa campaigning for the integration and rights of disabled children.

- We held a Tour-and-Treat for children on October 31st, which was attended by children from across the island looking for an alternative to the traditional Trick-or-Treating. Lisa-Dawn produced a question sheet, and children toured the church looking for the answers. We also had a craft table, which was very popular (as were the chocolates).
- In December, we held our Kids' Christmas Disco, and copious slices of pizza were provided by the Guild. We had children from St. Mark's, Holy Trinity and from the wider community.
- Once again we must thank Erica Davidson and her family for organising the Christingles for the service in December, I'm sure she has seen enough oranges to last her a lifetime!
- In December the children cleared out their cupboards at home, donating toys to a table top sale at the Vendors' Market. This raised \$128 for the South African charity Syakwazi, mentioned previously.
- The number of babies in the church family has really grown over the past year, leading to the very happy need for a baby-changing table in the bathroom in the Parish Hall. Thanks to Heather Willens for sourcing one for us.

Anybody interested in leading or helping with Junior Church sessions, please do let one of the team know. We are extremely lucky to have a thriving, growing group of children attending on a regular basis, and extra hands really do make the job much easier. You would be very welcome to join the fun!

Pastoral

- The Cottingham family once again supported our pastoral work in the local care homes by designing and making enough Christmas cards for the residents. A huge 'thank you' especially to the Cottingham grandchildren for donating their time and artistic skills.
- There is a calendar in the church porch for recording birthdays, please add your birthday to the calendar if it isn't already in there.
- We now have a monthly Bereavement Support Group which is available to all. This is held on the first Sunday of each month from 3-4.30pm. It is advertised through all the Anglican churches and online.
- In April we held a table top sale at the Parish Hall, raising over \$3k towards downing the debt.
- In April we had a presentation from charity Final Steps, who help people have the difficult conversations about end of life arrangements before these conversations are actually needed. This was much appreciated by those in attendance, and any further details can be provided by Jeanie Flath.
- In September we sent cards and well wishes to Marianne Herbert in the UK.
- In September Rev. Gav and I hosted a fine dining event at the Rectory, raising \$3560 towards downing the debt.
- We were all saddened by the deaths this year of Clarence Smith, Gloria Easton, Eugene 'Crumbug' Davis, Elsa Barros, Elizabeth Cart, Charles 'Sonny' Charves, Rev'd Canon Francis, and Kenneth Brangman. We pass our heartfelt sympathies to their friends and family.

Respectfully submitted
Helen Tyte, Pastoral Group Leader



PROPERTY & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE REPORT

For the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

Team Work makes the Dream work was the motto of the Property and Infrastructure Sub-Committee this year. We also soon discovered that the dreaming keeps the team working! We dreamed of tackling outstanding maintenance throughout the SMC Campus. We achieved much of what we set out to do, responded to unanticipated issues, that meant changing some of our plans.

The countless hours, effort and hard work performed by all members is highly commendable, and deeply appreciated. Below is a summary of some of our highlights:

Repairs:

1. Roof Maintenance: Parish Hall, Cottage 4, Rectory and Church were all repaired and painted in the current year. This means that in the past 18 months, we have completed 6 Of the 7 roofs, thus we only have one roof on the campus to complete, which will be done in the summer of the current year. After this, the roof maintenance will be staggered so that it is a more manageable expenditure.
2. However, a few months after the roof work, the church ceiling suffered a collapse in the northwest corner near the organ pipes, believed to be the result of an old crack that had been mended, but reopened after Hurricane Ernesto crossed the island. The ceiling has now been repaired.
3. A second set of handles were installed to assist with the step leading into the church from the south porch. The work was kindly donated by one of our contractors, Titan Construction.
4. In January of this year, the church roof developed new leaks in the north west, northeast, and above the pulpit near the chancel. All leaks were fixed by the original contractor, within two days of the leaks. We were informed that new cracks had opened, possibly caused by high winds.
5. A major renovation was undertaken at Cottage 4, commencing in November 2024, when the tenants moved out. While thousands of dollars were spent on the upgrades, we also saved thousands of dollars, thanks to the wonderful members of our congregation who donated their time and funds to undertake repairs. The upgrades included:
 - a. The interior and exterior walls were painted.
 - b. The wooden sections of the porch were sanded and repainted
 - c. The living room and bedroom floors were sanded, restored and painted.
 - d. The bathtub was reglazed
 - e. The aluminum, wind-out windows in the kitchen and bathroom were reframed
 - f. New water heater installed
 - g. The new appliances- fridge and stove were installed, and we negotiated a discount from the company. We were thankful for the donation of a gently used washer/dryer, which saved us significant funds
 - h. Teams of SMC members met on a regular basis to clean and tackle small jobs such as installing new light fixtures; replacing the mailbox, and cleaning the cottage. A massive thank you to John Nichols for installing the wiring for the new washer and dryer. Thank you to everyone who assisted with working on these projects so ably led by Barbara! In particular: Bob, John, Colin, Norris, Dave. And a special Thank you to Barabra for doing an amazing job! Thank you to Dave Bedard for picking up the baton while Barbara and I were off island, to ensure that the new tenants were able

to receive their keys on April 1st, 2025, and that all rentals of the hall went flawlessly.

6. A corner of the ceiling in the rectory office collapsed and was repaired in July 2024.
7. In the Bell tower, Rev Gav led a clean up crew that removed approximately five bags of birds nest and waste from the tower. Later, Colin repaired the three battens (paddles) that operate the carillon bells
8. We have a few major repair items at Cottage 9 that we hope to address by summer. There are significant cracks in the eastern walls in the kitchen, and second bedroom. Quotes have been received; the work is being planned.

Maintenance:

1. Numerous routine maintenance projects were undertaken around the campus throughout the year, ranging from water pump repairs, updated electrical outlets, new hardware on shutters, window repairs, rescreening and painting of the south porch church screen and main doors; Parish hall fans were removed, sanded to remove rust, painted and reinstalled; All of these tasks were completed by members of the P&I Committee; installation of lights and fixtures, and replacement of many of the light shades for the ball lights.
2. The Church and hall passed the fire safety inspection, but we were advised to install a smoke alarm system. We are seeking a suitable system.

Rentals:

1. Only occasional rentals occurred with our kitchen and hall.
2. Due to the assessment of all of the cottages to determine their market value rent, we learned that we were charging significantly below market value. We created a schedule to increase the rents by a small percentage until we close the gap.. The rents for the cottages affected were increased by 10% in June 2024. These increases are necessary to keep up with the maintenance of these fantastic assets. We are indeed blessed by the vision of past vestries, who assured our fiscal sustainability by acquiring the cottages, so that we have a steady revenue.
3. All rental cottages were also inspected by the P&I team to determine the status quo and for identifying necessary repairs. We then created an annual maintenance schedule and timeline for upgrades.

MaintainX

1. The P&I Team is still using MaintanX to track our projects. Thank you to Norris Ebbin who taught the team and stakeholders how to use the software. We are now able to report issues, prioritise the work, hire vendors, and track the work through this system.
2. The new Solar Lights that were installed in the grounds of SMC, to draw attention to the church are still working. The Christmas lighting focused on the tower, and the grounds and was deemed effective and beautiful.

Maintaining the campus is a costly undertaking. It would be wonderful to be able to have a schedule of fundraisers to offset the costs. For that, we need volunteers. We hope that you will help us.

I take this opportunity to offer heartfelt thanks to the members of the Property and Infrastructure Sub-Committee, for their outstanding dedication, ideas and hardwork. We endeavoured to meet in person each month, and only missed due to other church related events falling on our scheduled dates. In addition to our meetings, the team showed up regularly to assist with numerous special projects, special events, maintenance and extra meetings. It was an honour and a pleasure to be a part of the P&I team. I take this opportunity to offer a massive thank you to the extremely busy Property and Infrastructure Team, for making the Dream that is SMC, Work! May God bless you all!

Respectfully submitted

Lisa-Dawn Johnston, Property & Infrastructure Subcommittee



GRAVES COMMITTEE REPORT

For the period 1st April 2024 – 31st 2025

[**Note:** This year's report is largely a repeat of last year's with updates to statistical information.]

St. Mark's operates a Grave Management System – a database application – to record information about each grave – Leaseholder, Next-of-Kin, Burial records, Financial data etc. The annual administration of the graveyard falls into two general categories – Billing and Record Keeping.

Billing takes place in February each year as St. Mark's Financial year runs from 1st April each year thru 31st March the following year. The billing cycle mirrors this. Some 325 statements are produced by the system and passed over to Mark Moffat for mailing in early March each year. Payments are due by 30th April but are actually received over the summer and recorded in the database.

Record Keeping is an on-going process throughout the year. As a Leaseholder passes on then a new lease is established with their declared Next-of-Kin (Next-Person-Responsible). When a designated Next-of-Kin passes on then the Leaseholder designates another. Any changes of address or contact information are recorded as they occur – as long as we are advised of them – to maintain the database.

As interments take place in graves during the year then those names are recorded against the respective grave together with info regarding spaces remaining, grave dimensions etc. All this ensures that a comprehensive record is maintained in the database which has been built up over 16 years since the system was implemented in 2009.

As reported in previous years, the demand for graves for lease has slowed down to a trickle although we did establish two new leases this year. These two graves are now producing annual maintenance fees.

As I explained in my last report, and for the benefit of newer members, the crematorium option is now well established and offers a less expensive alternative to leasing a grave when a funeral is imminent. Where a family already leases a grave then full-body interments still appear to be preferred to cremation. This is changing along with the population demographic. The majority of our leaseholders are, like myself, of the "Post-war" or "Silent Generation" or of the "Baby Boomer's" generation. Our children and grandchildren are "Gen X" or later and there is a noticeable reluctance on the part of the younger generations to be laid to rest in the ground. Many grave leases have been passed on to these younger generations who maintain them out of respect for family history and their beloved ancestors but many have no intention of ever joining them there. During the past year there has been one lease cancelled due to the local family having gone extinct and an overseas Next-Person-Responsible not wanting anything to do with his ancestors. Also a couple of leases have been voluntarily transferred to another family member – in one case a leaseholder had multiple leases and wanted to transfer one now, rather than post-mortem, and thereby passing on the maintenance cost, and in another case a leaseholder was seriously in arrears on payment on three leases. This was resolved by terminating the leases and transferring them to a sibling who made good the arrears and thus the grave is financially productive again. We continue to have an inventory of available graves available for leasing. These will need to be cleaned before being re-leased, but this will not be done until a firm offer has been made and accepted.

There have been no changes in fees associated with grave leases or annual maintenance. If any members are interested in the lease of a family grave, please let me know of it and they can be

accommodated. The rates remain at \$12,500 for a new grave (of which we have none). Re-used/cleaned graves are available at \$10,000. As grave maintenance costs continue to rise some consideration may have to be given to reviewing the maintenance fees. I am reluctant to recommend this yet as many leaseholders already struggle financially. Grave Maintenance fees remain at \$100/annum for members of St. Mark's Church or \$125/annum for non-members.

Statistically speaking, during the 12 months under review, there have been 7 interments following funerals at St. Mark's; 6 interments only (service conducted elsewhere) and 10 graveside services. Out of 23 interments 5 were of ashes only.

I reported last year that we had obtained the services of a Mark Hall to take care of the cleaning and painting of our graves and related walls. The graves are Clorox-ed prior to Christmas and Clorox-ed/re-painted prior to Easter. I have been pleased with this new arrangement. I hope I may be permitted to undertake some restoration and painting work on the various internal walls in the year ahead.

I continue to be grateful to Vernon Douglas for his efforts as Sexton and in making the appropriate arrangements for graves to be opened and closed for burials. He is also an invaluable source of family genealogy and relationships when seeking people. Also, thanks to David Burrows Jr., our grave custodian, who undertakes the physical work of opening/closing, cleaning and repairing our graves.

Respectfully submitted by Peter Nash,
Graveyard Administrator.



SYNOD REPORT

For the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

As one of St. Mark's appointed Synod Reps, I attended the General Meetings on and 29th March 2025 and the Annual General Meeting of Synod on 30 November 2024. Each meeting was preceded by a celebration of Holy Communion.

In summary the matters that have been discussed in these meetings include:

The Synod Budget

- Presented by Campbell McBeath, Diocesan Treasurer and approved by the synod standing committee. There was an increase to parish allocations along with the 2.5% increase to clergy stipends.

Charting the Course

- Consolidated information packets were circulated to each parish, and parishes were encouraged to share the information and get more members involved in supporting the diocese's strategic vision and goals

Bridge House, Bishop's Lodge and St Augustine Road

- Renovation of Bridge House was completed and residents have moved in
- The sale of Bishop's Lodge has been successfully completed. Proceeds of the sale will be used exclusively to ensure an appropriate replacement property for future Bishops is provided.
- The sale of the property on St Augustine Road is being progressed

Pooled Insurance Initiative

- It was agreed that an RFP would be conducted to identify cost savings for parishes by pooling their property insurance. It was emphasized that parishes would still only pay premium in relation to their own schedules of property.

Installation of new clergy

- The Rev Carl Williams has been installed at St Mary's Warwick and the Rev Thomas Nesbitt is to be installed as Priest in Charge of St Peter's St George's and Chapel of Ease St David's

Reports included

- Racial Justice Committee reports on CURB restorative conversations
- Report from Director of Discipleship and Training
- Report from Ministry and Vocations
- Report on Canon Law Revision
- Report on Healthcare Funding
- Safeguarding Report
- BCS Report
- Volunteer Code of Conduct

Copies of these reports can be made available on request.

Respectfully submitted,
Helen Campbell, Synod Rep.



REPORT OF VESTRY NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

23 April 2025

The Vestry appointed a Nominating Committee consisting of myself as Chair, Warden Nicki Horan and Carys Caisey as a lay member of the congregation.

We were joined at our meetings by Rev Canon John Stow and Rev Gav Tyte.

We would first like to thank those who are retiring from Vestry this year by rotation being:

-Kelly Gilmour who served for 3 years as a Vestry member.

-Helen Campbell who served for 3 years as a Vestry member and also as Vestry Clerk.

We would also like to thank Shirene Fulton who has served for 2 years as a Vestry member and who is now stepping down for personal reasons.

All remaining Vestry members have kindly agreed to continue in office, if re-elected, being Nicki Horan and Lisa-Dawn Johnston as Churchwardens, and Angela Sainsbury, Jane Bielby, Annie Pearl, Bob Flath, Penny Henry, Geoff Robinson and Gabriel Cabral as Vestry members.

We are very fortunate that Stephen West is willing to be elected to the Vestry.

Accordingly it is the recommendation of this committee that the Vestry presently comprise these 10 members but that the Vestry be authorized to elect 2 more Vestry members, if possible and at their discretion, to bring the total Vestry membership to 12.

It was noted that a replacement Vestry Clerk will need to be appointed by the incoming Vestry, following Helen Campbell's retirement.

It is also our recommendation that the Vestry elect the Synod representatives.

Accordingly it is the recommendation of this committee that the Vestry comprise those members and serve as per the Vestry Succession Plan.

It is also our recommendation that the Vestry elect the Synod representatives.

Respectfully submitted



St. Mark's Anglican Church
The Rev'd. Canon John Stow ~ Priest-in-charge
Rev'd Gavin Tyte ~ Associate Priest