



ANNUAL REPORT

2024



St Hilary's

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AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer and Welcome – Adam Cetrangolo
2. Apologies Noted
3. Reception of 2023 Minutes
4. Reception of the Parish Roll
5. Nominations and Appointments
6. Reports:
 - a. Churchwardens – Fiona Hawke, Jon Ma, Melanie Oldland
 - b. Treasurer – Neil Morrison
 - i. Presentation of Audited Accounts
 - ii. Presentation of 2024-2025 Budget
 - iii. Appointment of Auditors
7. Lead Minister and Ministry Reports – Adam Cetrangolo
 - i. Strategic Plan Update - Adam Cetrangolo
8. Other Business / Questions
9. Note of Thanks
10. Closing Prayer

LEAD MINISTER'S REPORT

It's remarkable to think I'm now in my fourth year as Lead Minister at St. Hilary's. After years spent rebuilding both the literal and metaphorical foundations post-COVID lockdowns, this past year has focused on strategically laying new or revitalized building blocks on those solid foundations.

Among these building blocks have been new approaches to discipleship and evangelism, increased opportunities to pray in small and larger groups, reimagined worship teams and new opportunities for training, with several more on the horizon.

The consolidated ministry model at Kew initiated last October has spurred a significant increase in engagement with Sunday Club, new visitors at all five of our services each Sunday, many of whom have decided to make St Hil's their home church. We've additionally had an increase in midweek activities which is seeing us engage with many more members of the community.

At our Mont Albert Campus there has been a renewal of steady growth with ministry to married couples and singles, new innovations in the Kindergarten, Playgroup and Sunday Club and many new families joining the Church. It's worth noting that pre-COVID there was not a Sunday Club at Mont Albert!

The events of the past fortnight in the global Church remind us that the Church still has a long way to go to regain trust in our communities. Closer to home the Youth Ministry Futures report reminds us that the health of youth ministry across Australian Churches is sadly low (one in four churches have no youth and the median youth group size is 9 young people). These things remind us as we build at St Hilary's, that we are part of a much larger context that requires care and understanding rather than 'quick fix' solutions.

I am delighted to report that your ministry team, staff, parish council, wardens and many community members are hard at work seeking to both better understand, initiate and prayerfully implement new strategies moving forward. Of particular note is the work of the youth and young adult focus group facilitated by Heather Cetrangolo. This group has undertaken great work and will bring final recommendations to the Parish Council in the coming weeks.

One of the unexpected graces of this year has been the work undertaken by the HOPE4Refugees group who have worked tirelessly and sacrificially to settle the Al Hassan family into Australia. This is formally a one-year commitment that has now come to an end. There are countless amazing stories that the team can tell you, but in summary they have been an amazing witness of God's love, mercy and kindness to this family. The Al Hassan's have expressed their gratitude for the love, service and friendship shown to them. I express my thanks to the team that have worked diligently and pro-actively to make this transition possible.

Another joy has been seeing long-term community member, Conrad Chiu be ordained. Firstly as a Deacon last November and, last weekend, as a Priest. We are grateful for Conrad's service at every stage of his own journey with Jesus and we welcome him as a bi-vocational priest (and doctor) on our team.

These are just a few examples of how St Hilary's not only makes and matures disciples but also mobilises them for broader Kingdom ministry. Beneath the headings below, you can read about some of the more specific aspects of ministry that our team have been developing and leading throughout this past year.



DISCIPLESHIP

Over 130 people attended the St Hilary's Conference on 12st August, participating in person and online across two sessions (morning and evening). This conference led electives on areas of discipleship and mission. A big thank you to all the contributors, many of whom worked hard to provide both video and in person content. This type of conference worked well with the conference survey yielding a satisfactory rating of 4.3 out of 5, and so we are looking to do something in a similar format next year.

Six discipleship initiatives were launched at the Conference. These were designed to help us achieve our vision to make, mature and mobilise disciples at St Hilary's. The first initiative was the presentation of the Discipleship Pathway, which is an integrated and effective way of organising our ministries and activities so that people can engage in church life at any stage of their discipleship journey. The second initiative, the St Hilary's Core Practices, highlights nine spiritual practices for our church community, such as prayer, fasting, scripture, witness and generosity, to help us in our formation as disciples. The third, Discipleship by Appointment, offers an intentional conversation for everyone at St Hilary's who want to grow in their discipleship.

The fourth, the Essentials Course, is the development of a new 4 to 6 week course in 2025 which will be a way to integrate new members into our church. It will also help grow disciples at St Hilary's. The fifth, Micro-Groups, are groups of 3 people for those willing to pursue more intentional transformation and growth. Finally, an annual Discipleship Survey, which helps us get a big picture of how we are going as a church in our walk with Jesus. The good news is that most of these initiatives are up and running, with the two that are not yet in place, Micro-Groups and Essentials Course, are planned to start in the first half of the new year.

Kew: Over the past 18 months we have been experimenting with time based connect groups running alongside our legacy groups (Those groups that existed prior to Semester 2 2023) to attempt to meet the needs of more of those connected to our community. In addition to the 17 legacy groups, we have 11 time bound connect groups that combined these see approximately 200 people engaged in connect groups connect to Kew.

Mont Albert North: Has 4 connect groups and sees approximately 40 people meaningfully engaged in connect group ministry, and these groups are experiencing continued growth.

Key areas of focus in 2025: Moving into 2025 are to focus on stabilising the approach to running a hybrid connect group model, of both long term and time bound groups. It is clear that both of these approaches are useful in engaging the broad spectrum of people that attend St Hilary's, and individuals and families in different stages of life need different things from connect group ministries. Similarly, increasing the presence and awareness of initial and ongoing training for leaders is a key step in helping our connect groups to thrive. Tools for leaders to identify the stage their group is in, what they need and how to move forward into the future will be important as we continue to revitalise the ministry in 2025.

This year continued the Connect Group Bible Studies that follow the Teaching Series Exploring Evangelism (John), Pursuing God (Deuteronomy), Empowered Colossians (Colossians), Discipleship (various) and Where does our help come from? (1 Samuel). This has been received well and will continue into next year.

EVANGELISM

Alpha has been part of the DNA of St Hil's for a long time. This year we saw record participation at both our Term 2 large Alpha courses as well as at smaller gatherings throughout the year. A highlight was the group of ESL students led by Michelle and Kepas Turnbull who came together and watched the Alpha videos in their own language and then discussed the content together in their ESL groups, practicing



their English at the same time. One of these groups has continued to meet and are now hosting another Alpha course. I extend thanks to Kim Gordon who took the lead of our large course in Term 2. Kim led a great team of pray-ers, hospitality providers, small-group leaders and general helpers. We look forward to more Alpha gatherings in 2025.

We also launched an Evangelism Strategy in Term 3. This recognized the key place of an Alpha Course and the integral work of pre-evangelism activities throughout any given week. Additionally, it provides for equipping members of our community for one-on-one Gospel conversations as well as harnessing especially gifted Evangelists in our Church to help encourage and support the Church to be Evangelism-focused.

TRAINING

In order to move forward, we looked back on how training in St Hilary's was conducted in the past, primarily under the Peter Corney Training Centre (PCTC). Due to the recent changes in our demographics and also the greater accessibility of similar training seminars, it became apparent that the mode of training offered by PCTC is no longer serving the current needs of St Hilary's, nor filling a gap that was previously needed in the wider Christian community of Melbourne. The theologically and academically based seminars that we had been running in the PCTC, whilst very informative and intellectually stimulating for some, sadly did not translate into seeing more of our members being trained and equipped to serve our own growing needs. The training program that St Hilary's congregation needs now is one that helps us fulfill our mission of equipping and mobilising our members into active kingdom-minded disciples. As a result, the difficult but timely decision was made to close the PCTC, recognising the biblical principles that there is a season for all things and that of good stewardship.

Looking forward, St Hilary's training will be strategically planning to dovetail with the discipleship and mentoring programs as well as the evangelism program. The vision for future training in St. Hilary's will therefore be conducted via regular one-day seminars throughout the year that aim to fill the gaps that the discipleship and evangelism programs failed to meet, such as practical training for various areas of ministries. As a result, training at St Hilary's will be more targeted towards the needs of our members in order to encourage and empower them to become thriving and serving members of the church. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the immense contribution of the PCTC to the culture and ethos of St Hilary's, we are deeply grateful for the foundation that was laid before us, by those whose shoulders we stand upon.

PRAYER

Over the past year, we have seen God at work and answering prayers in many ways across our community. Our Prayer by Appointment and Confidential Prayer Circle teams have had greater take up over the last 12 months than they have in a while, and there have been incredible answers to prayer in healing and encouragement. Our Prayer Nights have been operating weekly for a large majority of the year, with larger gatherings on the first and third Mondays of the month, and an opportunity to gather in our new Prayer Room on the other weeks. These have had a great take up and have been wonderful opportunities to pray for our world, our church and one another. If you've not had a chance to join us, then we'd love to have you, any Monday night at 8pm at our Kew campus.

Our Prayer Room opened in January, and has been used by a range of different people from across the community over the course of the year. We ran two extended times of 24 hour prayer, one in the lead up to Alpha, and the other in the lead up to our mid-year Youth Camp. We're hoping to create more opportunities to engage in this way over the next year, so we'd love you to join us in one of many ways to pray across the church!



WORSHIP

It is such a blessing to have so many musicians across our church who serve so faithfully and with such passion, many of whom have been serving our church for 20+ years.

Much of the focus for Liz, as our worship pastor, has been on our 10am congregation this year, including getting a lot of the backend administration better coordinated and aligned.

Our 6pm band leaders have been running through some regular training together and have trialled a few ways at organising their bands this year. With a number of health issues for our 5:30pm band members across the year, we have been thankful to those who have helped serve this service across the year. Our evening services both continue to have a need for extra musicians, so if this is something you feel God is calling you towards, we'd always love to hear from you!

We recently held an all-in training night, hosting Grant Norsworthy, who led our team in sung worship, then some training to help us think about the purpose of why we lead our congregation in worship. It was a fantastic encouragement to the team with a lot of positive feedback.

Our hope over the next year is to find ways to better engage our Mont Albert North congregation musicians with those from our Kew services to help build up and encourage one another.

PASTORAL CARE

In pastoral care we continue to seek to offer a ministry of prayerful practical presence that is resourced from the overflow of our own lives with God. 2024's tone was characterised by quiet consistency and consolidation, and I am thankful to all our ministry staff and our wonderful pastoral care team members who have faithfully connected with and cared for church members across the congregations. We have witnessed the joy of prayers answered, and Christ's love expressed in tangible ways.

Initiatives that have emerged or been embedded this year include the Sunday Morning Chaplaincy team at Kew, creation of a dedicated meal support team, a weekly pastoral care intercession time in the prayer room and a database of specialist organisations to assist external referrals by the ministry team. A pastoral care strand was included in the Training Day in March, when attendees learned about the epidemic of loneliness and social isolation, mapped the many opportunities to foster relationships across St Hilary's and practised strategies for building bridges to connection. Team members have benefited from diocesan and external training resources in mental health, family violence and dementia.

Pastoral care team members hosted a "Four score and more" lunch for the most senior members of the Kew morning congregation - a grass roots initiative that we hope will become a termly event in the year ahead. The monthly Seniors' coffee at Mont Albert North has continued to provide a regular occasion for social connection and conversation.

These formal initiatives are one component of our pastoral care model. Much of the bedrock of peer-to-peer informal care occurs quietly and unseen across the parish in Sunday conversations, Connect groups and midweek ministries. It certainly doesn't go unnoticed though, and I am thankful for the caring culture that is evident across the church. As always if you or someone you know could do with some pastoral care, please alert a minister, member of a pastoral care team, or contact us at care@sthils.com.



MERCY

HOPE

The HOPE Food Drive was again very well led by Neil Morrison, who has now handed over leadership to David Turner. Big thanks to Neil for his work there and to the committee and over 250 volunteers. We involved thirteen churches and five schools and were able to man thirteen supermarkets. Over 30,000 items were collected. Boroondara Council has agreed to pay all the Food Drive expenses in 2025. We also experimented with a mini-Food Drive in October and had a successful day collecting at four supermarkets as a top up for the two local Food Banks (Camcare and BCO).

Kids HOPE is flourishing under the guidance of Libby White. North Balwyn Primary School value every mentor we provide and are very pleased that we can provide seventeen active volunteers from January 2025.

The HOPE4Refugees team worked incredibly hard to welcome the Al Hassan family to Australia. The Maughans, Wallbridges, and Turners showed Christs love in action, and coped superbly with all the problems they had to overcome. Good job! The family are now independent and grateful for the welcome they received.

The Prague House team continue their lovely work, with the monthly barbeques, and monthly drop in for coffee at John Street. They have built very strong supportive connections with staff and residents. Jonathan and Lizzie Chapman as the main contacts have linked us with several opportunities to help.

The weekly Rescue Food team do a wonderful, but largely unseen, weekly delivery of food from Second Bite to Anglicare. Kay Margetts continues to lead that work.

The Op Shop continues to be the engine for funding of HOPE and some MSJC projects and builds bridges into the community in many ways. Julia Pope led the team beautifully this year and will be succeeded by Alex Bahler in December. The shop delivered budgeted funding to the church programmes and was able to increase reserves.

The HOPE Inc team have now had a few years of being able to support local individuals directly and also agencies who support those in need. Strong repeat support has been given to BCO, Anglicare Mission House, recent arrivals in Coburg, and GR8M8s (a police backed sports programme for teens).

MSJC

The MSJC has had an eventful year with a number of changes.

After years of dedication, Mike Urwin handed the reigns over to Marissa Mills and Jolyon Edwards stepped off as the Parish Council representative. We said goodbye to Jonno Tennent, Vincent Lo and Priscilla Mellado, and we will soon farewell Tammy Shepherd who has been a good and faithful servant on the MSJC for 9 years! We thank them all for their passion, their wisdom and their discernment over the years. We had the delight of welcoming some new but familiar faces – Chrys Chandraraj, Simone Bahler and Andrew Smith – who together with the remaining members, make up a vibrant and dedicated team!

Due to change in financial and auditing policies, we had a large surplus at the end of the financial year. After prayerful consideration, this allowed us to partner with Scott & Sarah Morrison in their mission work and we were able to share God's generosity with some of our regular mission partners.

As the year ends, we have renewed with almost all our existing partners and parted ways with a few. Notably, the Logan Project (through Common Grace) don't need our funding anymore, and Redemption Church in Craigieburn have some exciting new transitions in the works as they grow and partner with other local organisations.

We continue to praise God for His providence and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide our decisions as we steward His generosity through our Church.



LIVINGSTONE MANDARIN COMMUNITY

The Livingstone Mandarin Community is led by Yi Cheng (Peter) Shih, with the support this past year of Conrad Chiu and a highly active and enthusiastic team dedicated to serving our Mandarin community. Although this ministry primarily takes place at our Mont Albert North campus, it has increasingly influenced the culture of our entire church. Here are some highlights from this past year of Gospel ministry:

- **Growth in members and family celebrations;** The 11am congregation has welcomed two new families, bringing fresh energy and spirit to our community. Additionally, the arrival of a newborn has added to our congregation's joyful celebration of life and family. And in addition to the families, there were 7 people baptised over the course of the year.
- **Steady attendance:** The Livingstone congregation has maintained an average attendance of 45 adults at Sunday services, with 15 children actively participating in Sunday programs. 3 families attend the weekday playgroup.
- **Improvements in Children's Ministry;** One significant improvement this year has been the relocation of the Sunday Club and Playgroup to a warmer, more welcoming space within the St Augustine's Kindergarten complex. Special thanks to both Tiffany and Yi Wei who have been looking after the children's ministries. Children are at the heart of our ministry, and their well-being remains a top priority.
- **Community Outreach Activities:** Special events such as Christmas Festival, weekly table tennis group, Food Drive, Mother's Day, and Father's Day have served as important occasions for expressing love within our community, bringing together families and friends. These events not only testify to God's love but also provided an opportunity to host an inter-church Mandarin youth worship night.
- **Enhanced inter-congregational ministry over the past year:** the Mandarin Ministry has played a larger role across the whole parish, participating in multiple combined events, including hosting the Christmas Festival, Raymond Island Camp, Good Friday, Pentecost, Kids Holiday Program, Alpha, Marriage Course, Singles forum and the Parenting courses. These shared ministries demonstrate the integration and harmony among different congregations.
- **The 9am Congregation;** We give thanks for the ongoing ministry of all involved in the 9am congregation at Mont Albert North and acknowledge their vital partnership with the Mandarin-speaking community, which is key to promoting Gospel growth on that campus.

The Mandarin Ministry is young and has great potential for growth. The Mont Albert North campus seeks additional prayer and practical support to expand the reach of the Gospel ministry within and beyond our parish. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributes in various ways. We look forward to another year of spiritual growth and community building.



CHILDREN & FAMILIES MINISTRY (CAFM)

These verses in Psalm 89 remind us of God's faithfulness in Children's and Families Ministry here at St Hilary's:

I will sing of the LORD's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

The CAFM team consists of four staff members, Joanne Howlett, Yi Wei (Anita) Shih, Fan (Tiffany) Wang and Amanda Lincke as team leader. I am very thankful for each of them and their desire for children and families to know the love of Jesus. The team are supported by Kate Kerr in countless ways and are thankful to God for all she does. This ministry is underpinned by a large group of people from across the church who serve as leaders at Sunday Club, Mainly Music, Playgroup, Leaping Lizards and special events. Thank you to each one of you for the way you serve our Saviour King Jesus.

This year CAFM ministry has continued to flourish and grow. Amanda notes that she has personally been encouraged by the number of new families joining our family services at Kew and Mont Albert North, Mainly Music and Playgroup. With the introduction of Leaping Lizards at North Balwyn, the team are connecting to more and more families each week.

Last year a children's ministry report was undertaken by Ridley College and the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. In the Diocese of Melbourne there are approximately 204 parishes. The report found that three thousand six hundred and eighty-eight children 0- 12 years of age attend Sunday School, Mainly Music, Playgroup and after school kids clubs each month. At St Hilary's we have 624 kids who are a part of Sunday Club, Playgroup, Mainly Music and Leaping Lizards each month. As you can see St Hilary's accounts for 17% of the monthly total (one in every six kids attending an Anglican Church is coming to St Hil's). There is much to be thankful to God for; He is just so faithful. Whilst numbers are part of the story what we really want to see is our families' become believers. This is what the CAFM team wrestle with each and every day. We now live and work in a very secular context. Today there are children in Boroondara who have never heard the name Jesus. So, how do we reach these families with the Gospel? We love them like Jesus does. However, we cannot do this alone, we need the support and encouragement of the whole church. Will you join us in declaring the LORD's great love forever and make your faithfulness known through all the generations?



YOUTH

This year, the guiding focus of the Revive Youth Ministry has been “Rebuild,” and this focus has shaped the approach to all activities and programs throughout the year. Although camps faced lower attendance, moving to a more intimate location in Grantville helped foster closer friendships across different year levels, which has had a positive impact on our regular Friday night gatherings. Additionally, there has been an inspiring increase in the youth’s personal engagement with God, as parents report that many are developing their faith more independently. Moving forward, a decision has been reached to replace the traditional Summer camp with new opportunities at the Raymond Island Camp and SUTS camp, ensuring a more sustainable approach for our youth leaders. Meanwhile, our Friday night sessions have been refreshed with clear learning intentions and values focused on “JFC” (Jesus, Fun, Community), creating a welcoming space where youth feel a strong sense of belonging.

Throughout the year, each term has introduced meaningful themes: Term 1 laid gospel foundations through the study of Mark; Term 2 addressed identity and relationships, with special sessions on gender and sexual identity led by Elizabeth Webster and myself; and Term 3 focused on creativity and evangelism, giving youth a platform to work on projects showcased during an outreach event. This Term the youth are looking at the book of James, focusing on how we should live as Christians. Next year’s theme, “Structure,” will focus on building a strong and repeatable foundation for our youth ministry. We plan to implement a three-year content rotation, designed so that youth who revisit topics will be equipped to lead and mentor younger year levels, reinforcing their own understanding while fostering leadership skills.



YOUNG ADULTS

This year, the young adults’ community has continued to flourish with 35 regular members and around 20 others connected through various relationships and ministries. Their commitment to serve God not only through the church but also through summer ministries is always inspiring, with many leading on beach missions or serving on the SUTS youth camp, where they make up an impressive quarter of the team.

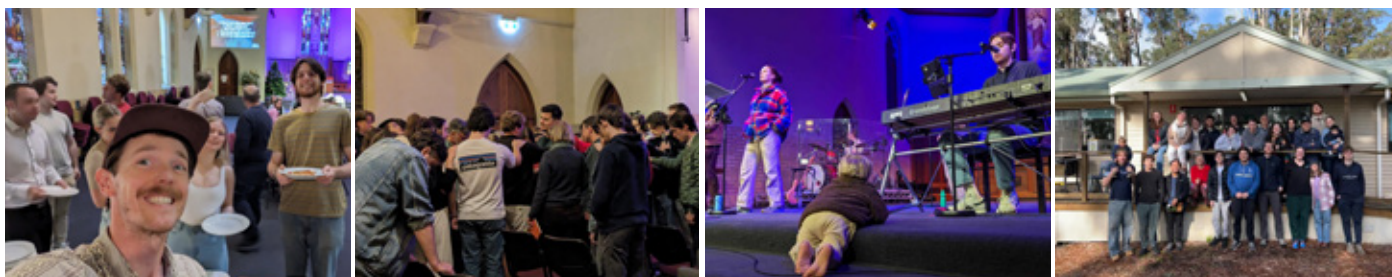
With a strong passion for worship, the group has benefitted from increased support for worship bands at the 6pm service, enriching the community experience by removing barriers to leadership and growth in this area, as well as building some much needed infrastructure to support their work.

Several young adult couples celebrated their wedding days this year and it has been a highlight to journey with them as they seek to bring Jesus not just into their wedding day, but into their whole marriage.

The young adults share supper with the 5:30 congregation almost every week and this has been a great opportunity for organic intergenerational relationships to grow, laying the foundation for this ministry to continue to develop into 2025.

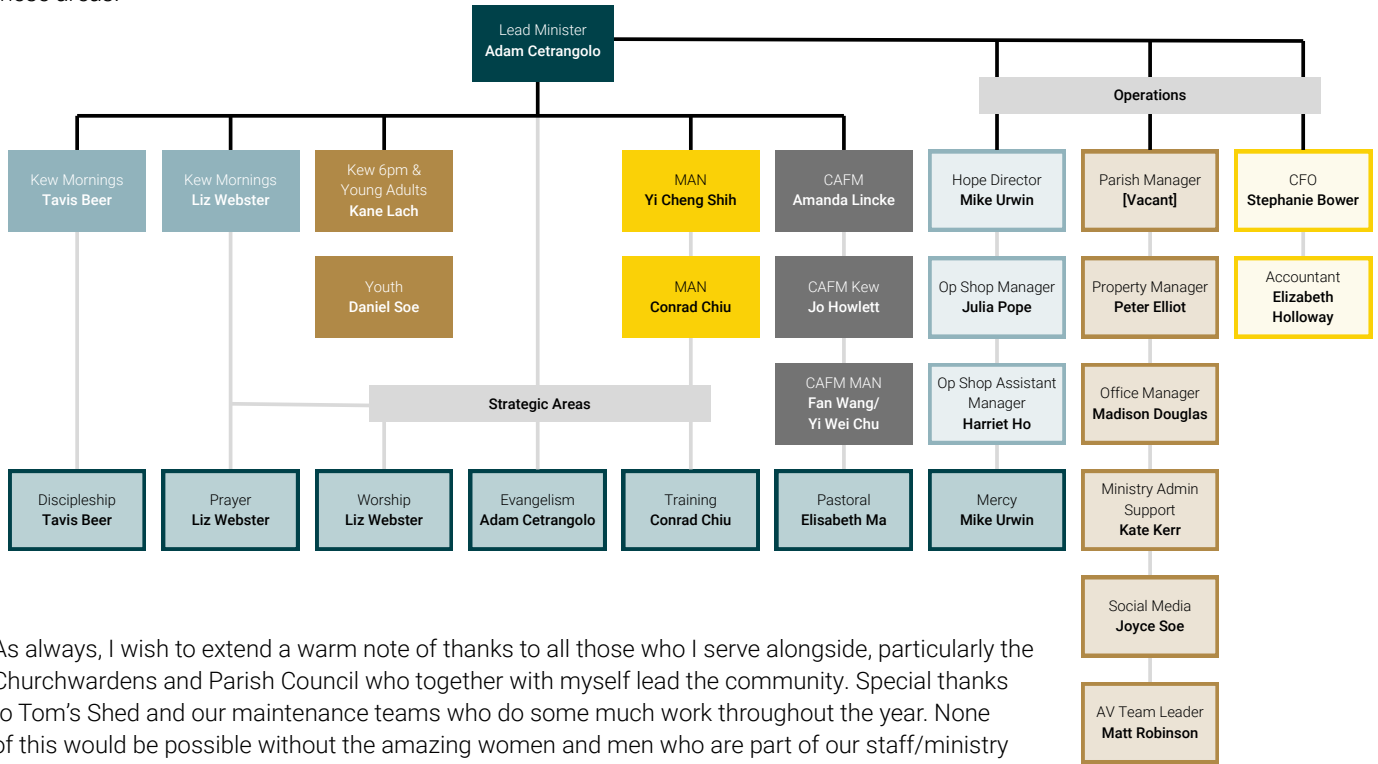
Notably, two young adults had the chance to prepare and deliver sermons, working alongside a minister, which provided valuable hands-on experience in ministry and leadership.

One of the key pieces of feedback gleaned from the discipleship survey was that there are many members of 6pm (many of whom are young adults) that do not feel as though they are operating in their giftings. As such, a key focus of 2025 will be to help our young people identify their gifts, be given opportunity to use and develop them and build a practice of stewarding those gifts in their lives.



CONCLUSION

As well as preparing for Annual Meeting, Advent, Christmas, Camps and 2025 Annual Planning, a major focus for me at this time is appointing a new Parish Manager. This role as you can see by the graphic below, will assist me in spending less time attending to the business side of ministry and more time with people and innovating new ministry as outlined in our strategic vision. The day-to-day work of this person will be to oversee property, HR, IT and risk management as well as providing some support to me. We have done a lot of work to build a solid and stable ministry team and I praise God for them, I believe that now is the time to appoint this role which will strengthen the administration, governance and compliance arm of the team that will complement those already working in these areas.



As always, I wish to extend a warm note of thanks to all those who I serve alongside, particularly the Churchwardens and Parish Council who together with myself lead the community. Special thanks to Tom's Shed and our maintenance teams who do some much work throughout the year. None of this would be possible without the amazing women and men who are part of our staff/ministry teams. My supervisor said to me recently that a good staff are like good architectural design, you don't notice them when everything is working, you only notice when it's not. I can attest to the fact that our team work exceptionally hard behind-the-scenes to be faithful ministers of the Gospel and loving and pastoral pastors after the pattern of the Chief shepherd. Be assured that they are praying for you and constantly talking and strategising about how they can serve the Church better. It is a privilege and a blessing to work with each of them.

Not that long ago, I "cancelled" the word "volunteer" because in Church life it connotes the idea of someone who is helping another person achieve their goal (perhaps a staff member or ministry leader), rather than an owner, a leader, a team member. Jesus famously said in John 15.15:

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

We have been invited in every sense to be a part of God's work, in that sense we are all priests, ministers, disciples and co-workers together. Whether ordained or lay, whether stipended staff or member of the Church, we are all the Body of Christ. So to each of you have turned up, served, noticed a need and filled it, come to the ministry team with an idea, piloted something new or faithfully continued to do something that you have been doing for years, THANK YOU. You are amazing and I am very grateful for you. Together, let us continue to show forth the love and beauty of Christ to a world that is so in need of it. Amen.

ADAM CETRANGOLO

Lead Minister



STATISTICS

CATEGORY	KEW	NB	MAN	TOTAL
Number of public Sunday Services were held	142	1	99	244
Number of public services held	144	14	100	258
The average number of Sunday communicants	95	0	30	125
The average number of Sunday attenders	267	0	81	348
The average number of Weekly attenders	267	0	81	348
The total number of acts of communion	6,743	283	1,582	8,608
The total number of communicants on Christmas Day	321	-	-	321
The total number of attenders on Christmas Day	374	70	-	444
The total number of communicants on Easter Day	241	-	64	305
The total number of attenders on Easter Day	254	-	91	345
Pastoral Services:				
Baptisms	9	4	2	15
Confirmations	5	0	0	5
Funerals	7	0	0	9
Weddings	2	0	0	4
Total:	23	4	2	34
The Number of Children and youth who regularly attend weekly activities:				
Sunday Club (103)	40	-	20	60
Mainly Music (106)	33	20	-	53
Playgroup (5)	-	-	5	5
Leaping Lizards (100)	-	80	-	80
Revive (27)	-	16	-	16
Connect Groups	28	-	4	32

**Numbers in brackets are how many are on the roll for each program*

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

After a few years of change (returning to in person services following COVID, and the amalgamation of the North Balwyn and Kew services), we reflect that 2023/24 was a year of stabilising and building a culture of trust, affirmation and encouragement for our church. St Hilary's has a rich history of Evangelising and Discipling to our neighbours and we thank God for the multitude of blessings he has bestowed on our church that enables us to continue in this ministry.

THE ROLE OF OUR PARISH COUNCIL

As a parish we are clear on what the role of our staff and members is, however, not all may be aware of what the Parish Council role is.

The Parish Council's role, on behalf of the whole church, is to enable the ministry of St Hilary's. This is done through working with the lead minister, and overseeing finance, property and compliance with Diocese/regulatory/legal requirements.

As a collective we meet monthly to work through this agenda, and over the course of each year, each ministry area presents a report to the Parish Council.

We represent the whole of the St Hilary's family and welcome your input and ideas. Please feel free to share these with a churchwarden or Parish Council member at any point.

FINANCE

The administration of our finances is a significant task, and we thank our Treasurer Neil Morrison and finance team of Stephanie Bower and Elizabeth Holloway for their diligence and wisdom in this work.

In 2023/24 supplementary income was sought to support a declining offertory income. We wish to acknowledge the efforts of Adam in ensuring God's Kingdom and ministry is enabled and the securing of additional income through license agreements with external organisations such as Leaping Lizards, Crossway and Kingdom Seed.

We are grateful to everyone who gives, often sacrificially and in the midst of rising living costs.

An extensive report on the financial performance and health of the church is outlined in the Treasurer's report.

PROPERTY

God has blessed us with several properties, and we have a responsibility to maintain and steward them wisely. On a quarterly basis an essential safety audit is conducted by the Diocese and on an annual basis a refreshment and maintenance schedule is put together with a lot of hard work going into ensuring our sites are safe and suitable for all our ministries throughout the week.

Over the course of recent years, significant works have been completed at North Balwyn and Kew, including the conclusion of the rectification works in the Kew courtyard and the building of a retainer wall next to the northern side of the hall. Regular ongoing maintenance is undertaken by our North Balwyn maintenance team. In 2024/25 we aim to enhance the facilities at Mont Albert North.



Some of the maintenance undertaken across the three campuses is very visible, and some less so. We extend our gratitude to the many "visible and invisible" people who make this possible. In particular we thank Peter Elliot; the Kew site team; Doug Crocket, David Maughan, David Turner and the North Balwyn site team; Vincent Lo, Xiao Ming Liu, Hao Ming Li and William Orange at Mont Albert North; the Tom's Shed crew and those who look after the Cormorant site.

COMMITTEES

The Parish Council would like to thank all those who have worked tirelessly as part of our committees and task groups to enable our ministries and support our community. We thank the Missions & Social Justice Committee, Hope Ministries Committee, Cormorant Committee, the Policy, Incumbency and Electoral Committees, the Site Maintenance Teams and the Fundraising and Finance Committee. We acknowledge and thank the many other individuals and teams who devote time, gifts and prayerfulness to the life and mission of St Hilary's.

LOOKING WITH EXCITEMENT TO OUR FUTURE

As a Parish Council we have deliberated and prayerfully considered challenges and opportunities that have been brought to us throughout the year. In every decision we have placed God at the centre and sought his guidance and favour.

We are excited with where God will lead us and look forward to seeing the fruits of the growing mid-week ministries and receiving recommendations from the Youth and Young Adults report following the systemic renewal work undertaken over the past six (6) months. We will continue to ensure our staff are equipped to provide strong spiritual leadership and are committed to stewarding God's gifts intentionally for the advancement of His kingdom.

MELANIE OLDLAND, JON MA AND FIONA HAWKE

on behalf of Parish Council



TREASURER'S REPORT

Thank you all for placing your trust in me as Treasurer.

I now present the 'Special Purpose Financial Reports' for year ended 30th September 2024 for acceptance by the parish.

First, however, I thank Adam, the staff and Parish Council for their support through this year. I am both excited and challenged for our future and I pray that we can all enjoy the fruits.

The three accounts shown in the Report are:

- The General Fund is used for our "normal" day-to-day parish operational income and expenditure.
- The Education Fund has been used as the Special Appeals Fund and the St Hilary's Education Centre Building Fund and included the debt we had for the building works. With the success of the Capital Appeal this Fund will now be closed.
- The Gift Fund is the St Hilary's Fund, a separate legal entity, an ancillary fund to receive donations for tax-deductible purposes. It includes donations received on a tax-deductible basis. We are restricted in how much we can receive in this account because we can only spend the funds on a Tax-deductible basis. Effectively we must pass these donations on to other Registered Charities through our Mission Giving and can only receive funds that we are able to pass on.

As with last year we have grouped the accounts, and I will refer to the Total column as this is the most relevant and gives a better overall picture of our financial position.

SUMMARY

The good news is that we had a Surplus of \$144,442 and were able to pay down our loan. We had an extremely successful Capital Appeal, and I thank you all for your support of this. The result and the speed of take-up was phenomenal.

The disappointing news is that our offertory is falling. Perhaps some of the fall was because of the success of the Capital Appeal, but it is a concern for our ongoing ministry.

With the closure of the Education Fund and success of the Capital Appeal we have \$66,000 of funds available for maintenance or future Capital Works.

INCOME

Our Total Income was \$1,981,163 this year (financial Year ended 30/9/2024) compared with \$2,104,896 last year (financial Year ended 30/9/2023).

Our Offertory income was about 11% less than last year. (\$1,294,000 compared with \$1,465,000). This is also less than budget so is putting pressure on the overall situation. We did, however, see a large increase in our Capital Appeal with a total of \$335,800 being received.

The Op Shop continued to perform well. (\$150,600 c.f. budget \$150,000) This year the Op Shop again contributed \$36,000 to our Missions budget.

Rental income was \$110,651 compared with last year \$94,042. This reflects a greater emphasis on our property income returns over the year. We anticipate further increases next year.

EXPENDITURE

Total Expenditure was \$1,836,721 compared with \$2,165,050 last year. As I highlighted earlier, this was \$144,442 less than our income and enabled us to pay our ADF loan commitments out.

- The major expense is our employment costs of \$863,000. This is 47% of our operating costs.
- Church property expenses were \$392,571. The major expenditure included
 - Insurance \$66,947 an increase of 20% on last year.
 - General Repairs and maintenance, \$91,254 an increase of 100% on last year.
 - Electricity \$22,128 an increase of 11% on last year.

- Cleaning \$37,701 an increase of 10% on last year.
- Capital Projects \$70,000.
- Provision for Maintenance and Arts Fund expenses \$54,596
- Our assessment for the Diocese was \$117,700, this is a reduction of \$24,000 on last year. I understand that this is still the largest payment to the Diocese by any church and we continue to review our Assessment each year. We have allowed \$115,000 in next year's budget.
- Mission giving is the equivalent of 15% of our offertory (comprising 12.5% from offertory giving and the remaining 2.5% from Op Shop profit). It was funded by the General Fund, the Gift Fund and out of the profits from the Op Shop. We also caught up on past unpaid payments with an additional \$50,140 out of the amounts provided in the past.
- We have provided for Land Tax this year and previously. This provision should be sufficient to cover any assessment we receive.

LOAN FROM ADF

The loan from the ADF was \$442,787 last year. With the surplus, the Capital Appeal, direct loan contributions from parishioners and using cash on deposit and in our bank we were able to clear this debt completely.

BALANCE SHEET

The Balance Sheet now shows that we have Net Assets of \$48,889. This is a great improvement on last year when we had negative assets.

A question has been raised about the properties we occupy. The complication we have is that the properties are held in Trust by the Melbourne Anglican Trust Corporation, so we cannot recognize their value in our Balance Sheet. Our major asset then is cash in the bank (\$313,000), which is down from last year's \$621,000 because we paid down our borrowings.

BUDGET 2024/25

Now we are looking to the future. In planning for next year (ending September 2025), we did not want to reach too far ahead of ourselves. We budgeted for what we believed at the time was an achievable and balanced target. However, since the budget was formulated, we have seen a dip in our income, and I feel that the budget will really challenge us.

Projecting our income is not easy as it varies from month to month, but over the last two years offertory had averaged about \$120,000 per month. So, this is what we have used for the next twelve months. In the last 6 months the average has been \$101,000.

Other income is forecast, roughly in line with this year with rental income the only significant increase on this year (\$100,000).

The expenditure budget for next year is \$1,886,000 compared with our actual expenditure last year of \$1,836,000.

The staffing levels in the budget do provide for growth at this stage, but the Parish Council has committed to reviewing this increase if our income is not sufficient.

Last year I highlighted the issue of the Capital and maintenance budget, and whilst I am slightly more comfortable than last year it continues to be a major concern. We have three sites and four residences that are all in need of ongoing work. In the year just completed we spent \$91,000 on maintenance. The budget only includes what was deemed as urgent and necessary, but we also hold the \$66,000 maintenance funds, which should take some pressure off. I repeat my comments from last year and continue to be thankful for the people from Tom's shed, and the North Balwyn and Mont Albert maintenance teams as they take on several of the smaller projects for us.

The budget also had a provision for interest payments of \$22,000 and as we have cleared the loan this will not be required.

With this budget I hope and pray that we can achieve God's task for us in Making, Maturing and Mobilising disciples of Jesus.

Thank you, again, for trusting me in this role and for the many words of support and encouragement I have received.

NEIL MORRISON

Treasurer





 **St Hilary's**

ANNUAL REPORT 2024