

Individual Reports

Fabric and Property

Important progress has been made regarding the church-owned property at 125 Dalling Road. Works to the two flats were completed at the end of October and tenants have now been successfully installed through Horton & Garton. The upper flat is occupied by two research doctors from Imperial College, while the ground-floor flat is let to an executive assistant in the design industry. Both tenants provided strong references and are paying market rent, with rental income now covering property-related expenses. See Tenancy Agreement

The church's heating system has presented ongoing concerns. The system failed in November, requiring temporary heating to be installed at short notice. Engineers identified the problem as a faulty electrical transformer and cable, which have since been addressed. While heating has been restored to working order, the plant dates from the 1980s and is now considered well beyond its expected service life. Professional advice recommends a full survey and eventual overhaul or replacement. Particular areas requiring attention include the radiator system covering the church, office and first-floor toilets, and the water heater in the cleaning cupboard. The main heating unit itself urgently requires replacement. See Engineer's Report.

Further routine maintenance and improvements have also taken place during the period. The organ and piano have been tuned, the lighting conductor tested, and additional security lighting installed. Work continues to resolve recurring issues linked to the cesspit system, which has occasionally produced unpleasant smells. Contractors have already undertaken remedial work, but further monitoring and descaling measures are likely to be necessary.

Inside the church, several fabric-related adjustments have been undertaken. Items previously stored in the west side, lower hall and upper hall were temporarily relocated to the Lady Chapel, with some surplus materials moved to the boiler room or disposed of. The Sedilia has been dismantled and stored at the rear of the church and will in due course be reassembled within the Lady Chapel. In addition, a new north-transsept panel, Flight into Egypt by John Afflick, has been installed despite the practical challenges posed by the hardness of the church walls.

Tenancies and Building Use

Ballet Black continues to occupy the west side of the church under a temporary licence that has been renewed periodically. Work is currently underway with legal advisers to finalise a longer licence agreement, which will form part of a faculty application expected to be submitted by the end of March.

Other community uses of the building continue. The Filipino Baptist Church will cease its Friday use of the old vestry from April but will continue Sunday worship. Other activities such as Saturday maths tutoring and Tuesday AA meetings remain active.

Administration and Staffing

The parish has faced a number of administrative challenges during the period. Following Lady Tennent-Brown's departure after temporary admin cover in the autumn, administrative

responsibilities returned temporarily to the Churchwarden, Anthony Biggs. This arrangement cannot continue beyond Easter, and plans are therefore being developed to restructure and recruit several administrative and volunteer roles, including parish administration, a junior church/education role, a sacristan and a director of music.

Overall, while the period has been demanding, important progress has been made both in maintaining the fabric of the church and in addressing longer-term administrative and property matters. Continued attention to heating infrastructure, staffing capacity and licensing arrangements will be key priorities in the months ahead.

- Finalise Ballet Black licence wording Follow up with Jane Gales and the solicitor to agree and finalise the long licence wording so it can be included in the faculty application at the end of March.

- Submit faculty application Prepare and submit the faculty application by the end of March, including licence documentation and supporting papers for Ballet Black.
- Heating survey & replacement plan Commission a full heating system survey and obtain costed options for overhaul/replacement; liaise with Anna Ellis and the heating engineer and schedule contractor quotes.

- Recruit/admin restructure Develop and advertise a plan to fill administration sub-roles (four roles), junior church/education cover, sacristan and director of music before Anthony's temporary cover ends after Easter.
- Resolve drains/cesspit issues Engage drainage contractors to revisit the cesspit/drain works, arrange follow-up descaling and mitigation measures and monitor for recurrence of smells.

Overview

- Busy period (Nov-Mar) covering Advent, Christmas, patronal festival and Easter planning.
- Property works completed: 2 flats at 125 Dalling Road finished and let at market rent.
- Ballet Black tenancy: temporary licence in place; longer licence/faculty application planned.
- Heating failures & ageing plant: transformer/cable fault; system from 1980s — overdue overhaul and some units require replacement.
- Staffing & volunteer gaps: administration, junior church, sacristan and director of music roles need filling.
- Ongoing maintenance: drains/cesspit smells recurring; organ/piano tuning, lighting conductor test, security lighting fitted.

Events, services & concerts

- Churchwarden report by Anthony Biggs for the Church of the Holy Innocence.
- Reporting period: beginning of November through beginning of March.

- Period was very busy due to Advent, Christmas, patronal festival, and planning for Easter Tide.
- Church hosted regular services, funerals, concerts, and other church events.
- Charity concerts included Oppidan Foundation (run by Anna Boden), UCL Choir, Offbeat Choir (raising funds for Tree of Hope), and artists-in-residence Albion Orchestra.

125 Dalling Road: works & lettings

- Works to 125 Dalling Road (two church-owned flats) completed end of October.
- Horton & Garden agency sourced tenants for both flats.
- Upper flat occupied by two Imperial research doctors; ground-floor flat occupied by an executive assistant to a designer.
- Both tenants paid the specified market rent and provided good references.
- Rental payments began and bills were being paid; income started covering expenses.

Ballet Black tenancy & licence

- Ballet Black located on west side of church on a temporary licence renewed every three months.
- A longer licence was issued at the beginning of the year to avoid frequent renewals.
- Invoicing remained on a quarterly basis.
- A full faculty application, including the licence, was planned for end of March.
- Jane Gales and the solicitor negotiated the licence; drafts circulated over several months and the agreement was nearing finalization.

Heating failures & urgent plant repairs

- Heating failed in November; temporary heating was installed at short notice.
- Engineers identified the fault as a switched electrical transformer and a switched cable.
- Heating now functions reasonably well, but the system dates from the 1980s and is long overdue for overhaul.
- Anna Ellis (project manager for 125) organised a heating-engineer meeting; additional engineer notes recommended a full overhaul.
- Units requiring attention: wet water system in the old vestry; radiator system serving main church, office, and first-floor toilets; cleaning-cupboard water heater—main boiler requires replacement.

Administration & staffing vacancies

- Administration was handled by Lindy Tennant-Brown until her departure in autumn.
- Administration returned to Church Warden Anthony Biggs on a temporary basis; he cannot continue after Easter.
- Recruitment needed for an educational/junior-church role due to Flora and Salem reduced attendance.
- Sacristan role remains unfilled; Michelle cannot take it because of other commitments.
- Director of music role remains vacant.

Fabric, storage & community use

- Items from west side, lower hall and upper hall were stored in the lady chapel; some items were moved to the boiler room or discarded.
- Sedilia was deconstructed, stored at the rear of the church and scheduled for reassembly into the lady chapel.
- New north-transsept panel Flight into Egypt by John Afflick was installed by John Afflick and Anthony Biggs; installation was difficult due to very thick walls.
- Filipino Baptist Church will cease using the old vestry for Friday prayer meetings from April but will continue Sunday worship in the main church and old vestry; Saturday maths tutoring (Becky George) and Tuesday AA sessions continue.
- Old vestry is underused; Ballet Black requested a formal licence/contract despite satisfaction with the venue; Anthony met chair Althea to discuss concerns.

Action Items

- Speaker B - Oversee flats development Anna Ellis (interior designer) to continue overseeing the development and finishing of the two flats and coordinate with Merko Limited and the letting agent.
- Speaker B - Complete refurbishment works Merko Limited to complete and certify the refurbishment works to the two flats and hand over to the letting agent (works already instructed and executed over ~6 months).
- Barbara Torrance, Anna Ellis, Father David, John Afflick, Anthony Biggs, Lindy Tenant Brown - Commission heating survey Arrange appointment of a heating surveyor/engineer to study options and recommend environmentally friendly, cost-effective, long-lasting systems, with separate controls for the dance studio and church.
- Barbara Torrance, Anna Ellis, Father David, John Afflick, Anthony Biggs, Lindy Tenant Brown - Commission vicarage survey Commission a survey of the vicarage to determine outstanding works required following prior building works and to plan remediation and next steps.

Overview

- Ballet Black became a long-term, single tenant occupying the Upper Hall (dance studio), West Hall (office) and other spaces — providing financial security and a strong relationship.
- Converted the old vestry into a new community space with refurbished kitchens, toilets, access ramp and locks — now in active use by hirsers and the Filipino Baptist Church.
- Renovated two flats at 125 Downing Road (complete refurbishment over ~6 months) and rented them out via local agent — project successful.
- Church heating system (installed in the 1980s) is falling; plan to commission a heating surveyor/engineer to recommend environmentally friendly, lasting, cost-effective systems and separate controls for dance studio and church.
- Ongoing fabric issues: roof leakage/historic damage (insurance claim declined), guttering replacement, recurring drain/cesspit blockages, and a planned vicarage survey to identify outstanding works for Father David.

Ballet Black tenancy & space reallocation

- Upper Hall had served for many years as a rehearsal and development space for theatre and opera companies.
- Approach to Ballet Black began in July 2024 to secure a long-term exclusive tenant.
- Ballet Black moved in at the end of January 2025 and converted spaces: Upper Hall → world-class dance studio; upstairs kitchen → Pilates/rehab; Lower Hall → dressing rooms; West Hall → offices, kitchen, toilets.
- Ballet Black received shared use of the main entrance, central staircase, and first-floor toilets.
- Single long-term tenant provides increased financial security; Ballet Black had been in the building for almost 1 year and the partnership proved mutually beneficial; church members attended performances at the Coronet Theatre and Sadler's Wells.

Vestry conversion → community space

- Converted the old vestry into a new community space.
- Space was accessed via the church and separate entrances on Dorville Crescent and rear on Danning Road.
- Relocated kitchen from the lower hall into the old vestry.
- Renovations included updated toilets, new flooring, updated locks, new lighting, and a ramp for disabled access.
- Conversion increased functional community space.

125 Downing Road flats: refurbishment & lettings

- Church-owned two flats at 125 Downing Road east of the church had fallen into disrepair for decades.
- Bequest from Barbara Torrance was designated to renovate the flats and rent them at market rates to fund junior church and music offering.
- Insurance claim prompted remedial works over the prior two years; Anna Ellis was appointed in beginning of 2025 and, after tender, Merko Limited was instructed to carry out the project.
- Works lasted approximately six months and delivered complete high-standard refurbishment (new bathrooms, kitchens, doors, windows, plastering, carpeting).
- Flats were rented via Horton and Garden; two new tenants moved in at the end of November, and the outcome proved successful.

Heating system failures & replacement plans

- Ballet Black move revealed heating system installed in the 1980s and nearing failure.
- System experienced multiple breakdowns in January–February and late 2025, requiring costly temporary heating.
- Single central system currently served both church and dance studio, allowing heating of only one space at a time.
- Plan enacted to install separate heating for the church and the dance studio (former upper hall).
- Additional new systems planned for the dancing room (former lower hall) and the office (former west hall); end of 2025 decision to commission a heating surveyor/engineer to recommend an environmentally friendly, cost-effective, durable solution.

Roof/drainage/insurance issues & vicarage survey

Roles And Responsibilities

The server team has maintained services with dedication, despite a reduction in numbers. Several members have taken on extra duties to ensure continuity. There is an opportunity to encourage and welcome new servers in the coming year.

Servers – Samuel Davies

Rotas

- Our administration is settled and developed which will help to create a basis for future ideas and development going forward.
- As well as our usual roster of charity concerts, and outside bookings we have added concerts for young people to give them a chance to show their recent music work.
- Christian Goursaud and the English Consort of Voices sung for our Advent Carol Service and Feast of Title and Stone Tung and his brass quintet played at Easter Day service and our Christmas Midnight Mass. We have also had supporting professional singers at Easter and Christmas services. The combination of beautiful professional music-making and hearty voluntary singing enhances our music ministry and is hopefully appreciated by the congregation.
- We have a published schedule of music for the year with volunteers, hymns, special music, professional musicians, choir anthems and more that can be accessed by the HI music community, but which could be published more widely with some further liaison.
- The Choir has continued to sing as part of every Sunday service. We invariably sing the psalm and hymns, and our anthem singing has increased moderately as we have settled into a good rehearsal routine. We have valued regular choir members who are able to provide our core sound and then a number of other members who come less frequently but with no less enthusiasm when participating. We have regular interest from singers wanting to join and so the overall membership has increased somewhat, especially for special services.
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- Insurance claim for south transept wall hopper/storm damage (made a couple of years ago) was declined by Ecclesiastical.
- Specialist report and prior Spectrum work determined damage resulted from historic wear/roof leakage and reduced visible brickwork damage.
- Roof repairs and gutter replacement/updating across all church areas scheduled within next 1–2 years.
- Vicarage (home of Father David) retained unresolved issues from building works in 2020; a survey will determine required works and next steps.
- Music:

The server team supports the clergy and ensures the smooth running of services, key liturgical roles include:

MC (master of ceremonies): oversees service flow and supports clergy and servers

Crucifer: leads the procession with procedural cross

Thurifer: Handles incense during the service

Acolytes (x2) Assist with candles and provide general altar support.

Server Team

Claudette Gray, Jane Jales, Jane Lawrence, Garrett Chin, Kaitlin Chin, Ruita, Ria, Myan, Jessamy Smith, Tilly Smith, Nick Gordon, Joe Gordon, Sam Davies, Robyn Gray, Marcia Hill, Rufus, Leah Gray, Neil Wallace.

Challenges And Adaptations

The team has seen a reduction in available servers due to life changes, university moves, health concerns (E.G. thurible smoke irritation), maternity leave, career changes and bereavement.

Maintaining resilience across services has been challenging, but the team has shown dedication and flexibility.

Kaitlin, Garrett and Marcia have especially been supportive.

Local Community changes: new families with young children, limiting participation for now.

Looking Ahead

Aim to grow the server team by encouraging by members of the congregation especially older children and young people to consider serving

Introduction sessions will be offered for those interested.

Anyone interested is encouraged to speak to Sam Davies.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to all team members for their dedication, flexibility and commitment especially during times of reduced numbers, their efforts have ensured that the ministry continues with reverence and care.

Readers – Neil Wallis

This is my first Holy Innocents "Readers Rota" Report and I am both proud and grateful to submit it. Running the rota is truly a blessing.

Similarly it is a blessing - one typical of our church family, I believe - that the Readers Rota has been so enthusiastically and skilfully supported by so many members of the congregation in this last year.

There are 18 regular members of the Rota at present, which means on average they are each asked to read in four or five regular Services a year, plus occasionally in special events such as the upcoming Holy Week and at Christmas

The bible readings every Sunday and on Feast and Special days are a vital part of our Services, and they are treated as such with due reverence by our readers, for which we are all grateful.

Unfortunately one of our regular team, Victoria Wethered ("Toy") has had to at least temporarily step back, but we thank her deeply for her many years of splendid service.

But at the same time a new young member of our congregation, Louis Prosser, has volunteered to join the rota, for which we are delighted.

We would always welcome more volunteers, of course - not least because actually reading aloud a Lesson to your fellow congregation members is an enriching experience in itself. The idea of using the formally blank reverse of the weekly Service Sheet to carry Church information and promote upcoming events is clearly very successful. We thank Elizabeth Pearcey and our church wardens for their contributions to that task.

The current team: Elizabeth Pearcey, Keeley Mwikola, Garrett Chinn, Janis Cammell, Sally Kennedy, Sam Davies, Stella Griffiths, Joe Gordon, Nick Gordon, Steve Farrant, Dominic Wilson, Louise Wilson, Louis Prosser, Robyn Gray, Cedric Fromageot, Neil Wallis, Adam Smith, Anthony Biggs

Sacristans – Stella Griffiths and Michele Johnson

The past few months have been a little confusing for the sacristy team because of the relocation of the kitchen to the Old Vestry, and the

need to use the Lady Chapel as a temporary storage space.

Each of the 4 present members of the team has their specific tasks to carry out. Michele, the church's contract cleaner, has added

sacristy duties to her workload, with guidance from Stella.

As the general cost of living has increased, so has the cost of altar supplies, including candles and communion wine, which will of course, be reflected in the Annual Accounts.

Renovation of the church kneelers is on-going. Many of them were worked in the 1990s and the

foam pads have disintegrated. New kneelers

continue to be added from time to time.

Intercessions - Eve Smith-Obeng

Intercessions are the prayers offered on behalf of the church and the world, bringing before God the joys, concerns, and needs of our community and beyond. They are shaped by what is happening in our church family, our local community, and the wider world, helping us to respond prayerfully to current events, times of celebration, and moments of challenge. Through this ministry, the church is invited to listen, reflect, and pray together with compassion and hope.

Eve continues in her role as Intercessor Coordinator and oversees the rota. The intercessions team currently consists of six members: Oliver, Claudette, Adam A, Jane J, Nick G, and Kaitlin C. We extend our sincere thanks to Robyn, who has recently stepped down from the team, for her faithful service and valuable contribution over the years. Our gratitude also goes to everyone who serves in this ministry.

With a smaller team in place, the need for additional contributors is becoming increasingly important to ensure continuity and provide resilience when members are unavailable. Anyone who is interested in joining this ministry is warmly encouraged to contact our church wardens, Anthony or Claudette, for more information.

Flowers – Sophie Strout

What can we say to the amazing team of Holy Innocents' flower arrangers for all their work? We can start with a simple but very heartfelt, "Thank you!" The time, love and uniquely personal talent each person brings is immensely appreciated.

It's a joy to mark another year of welcoming nature that lifts the spirits and delights the senses into the heart of Holy Innocents.

During Ordinary Time, each member has free reign with colour, honing their artistic eye for the themes of special feast days, and we also continue to enjoy co-ordinating special arrangements for private occasions, as these arise.

Easter heralds the promise of spring flowers and each year a subtle 'twist' to the Easter Garden, while Christmas time is a flurry of bright ribbons, a bonnie Christmas tree and decorated fir dancing in the windows. The wonderful Ineta from Wheelers supplies us for these bigger occasions, with one particularly beautiful tree outside the church yielding the foliage for the two Remembrance wreaths.

Our key displays are in front of the altar, by Father David near the lectern, and in between the stunning new panel commission and votive candles. We also often place a vase by the font and small bunches or single stems in the entrance hall and dotted around the vestibule—not forgetting a single flower next to Mary, remembering Barbara Torrance's love of the ritual.

We are incredibly lucky to have the support of Anthony—often motoring down on his two wheels to grant out-of-hours access to our floral endeavours. Mariamne generously re-joins us, now that Julian is a little bit bigger, while Emma takes a step back, kindly pitching in at times of need on an ad-hoc basis. Stella, Larry, Flora and Janis are also wonderful Flower Rota friends, not forgetting Caroline and David as our financial and artistic directors.

We look forward to the next 12 months of fragrance and community.

Team: Mariamne; Victoria; Louise C; Louise W; Isabella

Children and Families – Flora Salum

In 2026- my role continues as a volunteer for the Junior Church. I remain focused on supporting, encouraging, and building friendships and relationships within our parish community, particularly with families who have young children. Recently, we have been blessed with families with little ones joining our church.

After the Lent period, I plan to spend time speaking with these families about ways to help their children engage more comfortably during the service so they can enjoy it with minimal disruption. This will also give the little ones time to get to know me, become familiar with me, and feel more comfortable.

Welcoming these families into the life of the church is always encouraging, and we aim to help them feel included, valued, and part of our growing community.

Church leadership and the congregation understand that this is not something I can do on my own, and they continue to be very supportive and encouraging. As a church family, we remain committed to strengthening this area of ministry and finding ways to better connect with and encourage families and young people in our local community as we continue our work together.

Alma - Joe Gordon

Continuing our ongoing support for ALMA, this year we raised £161.20 during our ALMA Sunday service. We have also made recent efforts to connect with our link parish in Mucaba.

This year, we will work with the charity to develop this further. With ALMA Sunday falling on July 12th this year, we are also looking to invite one of the ALMA team to talk more about the partnership that day to further our understanding of the ways our fundraising can help.

Safeguarding – Louise Wilson

There have been no safeguarding incidents during the last year.

On two occasions our visiting organist has been under a voluntary Safeguarding Agreement. The appropriate precautions were put in place and there were no issues.

The PCC received reports from the Safeguarding Officer on 23.03.2025, 6th April 2025 (APCM) and 07.09.2025.

I am pleased to report that, although there are still some training to be done, the Church of England Safeguarding Dashboard system has promoted us from a Level 1 to a Level 2 Safeguarding Action Plan. Level 2 requires certain additional policies to be put in propose for the next PCC session.

Some people still need to complete some training modules (a Level 1 requirement). Churchwardens and Junior Church Lead need to complete Leadership training; and Churchwardens need to complete Safer Recruitment training. Some PCC members and officers also need to complete the enhanced DBS check.

The church has not yet recruited for the position of office administrator; when we do so, we will need to follow the Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance.