

Theology House

I am pleased to report to Synod on the activities of Theology House in 2024. We are a small but committed team and we are grateful for the opportunity to serve the Church through education, training, and resources. I am hugely indebted to Sarah Larritt (Administrator) and Sarah Dunning (Librarian) for their dedication and professionalism in this ministry.

We offered the Theology House Certificate in Ministry and Leadership for the third time. We had a cohort of five students who successfully completed the programme and earned their certificates with a specialisation in ministry with under 40s. It's hard to overstate the privilege of journeying with committed disciples of Christ over a year. Teaching the Bible & Theology stream was once again a highlight of my week. The Reverend Sammy Mould and Paul Hegglun from the Diocese led the Ministry with Under40s and Leadership & Discipleship streams respectively and contributed to an excellent outcome. We are grateful to the St John' College Trust Board for granting scholarships to our students to enable them to make the programme the priority of their year.

The second of two Lenten studies in response to the work of the Abuse in Care Royal Commission, *A Future of Hope* was published in 2024. Again, this was the work of several authors with a diverse range of knowledge and experience. This was challenging work but important for churches to become the communities we are called to be. Starting in 2025, I am working on a series of three lectionary-based studies in collaboration with the Reverend Sarah West from Auckland Diocese. Our first *Family Faith Journal* was well-received. We have produced one for 2025 and are working on 2026's.

I had a further opportunity to help with confirmation preparation with a cohort from the parish of St Michael and All Angels. I hope to continue my exploration of approaches to this important ministry, in including working with some of our Anglican schools. While I suspect there is some need for updated guidance and possibly resources for this work, striking the balance between providing a useful template and recognising the diversity of contexts in the Diocese and beyond is a huge challenge.

We hosted two excellent seminars in August. "Preaching the Gospel from the Old Testament" and "Flourish: an exploration of Human Flourishing" were both well attended. Attendees and speakers both were encouraged by the level of engagement between local Christians and top tier academics. I am grateful for the

willingness of busy academics to give time and energy to these conversations. I am excited to repeat this success in 2025.

Our library usage statistics have continued to grow. We consistently added new members throughout the year and our circulation numbers are very healthy. At least part of this is due to our excellent location in the Anglican Centre at Cardale House in the central city, with good parking and public transport access. Our thanks to ADMSC for managing the Anglican Centre and providing us with an excellent home.

I have been providing some additional support to the Diocese, covering some of what has commonly been associated with the Ministry Educator role. This has included oversight of scholarship applications and the funding application for education programmes to the St John's College Trust Board. In 2024 I coordinated the post-ordination training programme on behalf of Bishop Peter. Training people for ministry is one of the primary purposes for which Theology House exists. From 2025, this role will revert back to the Diocese, but I still look forward to being involved in the programme, including leading some of the training.

Our draft annual accounts show a large on-paper surplus primarily due to excellent returns in financial markets in 2024. This growth in our endowments is vital to continue our ministry into the future. We remain grateful to the St John's College Trust Board for an annual operating grant and to the Church Property Trustees who manage the bulk of our investments.

Theology House benefits immensely from the service of our board:

Rt Rev'd Dr Peter Carrell (Chair)

Rev'd Canon Cameron Pickering (Deputy Chair)

Peter Hart

Rev'd Margaret Neate

Rev'd Chris Orczy

Tom Elliott

I am grateful for their guidance and oversight.

Gareth Bezett, Director