



CHRIST Church

Epsom Common



Annual Report 2023-2024

Prepared for distribution in advance of the
Annual Parochial Church Meeting 21 April 2024

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Christ Church Epsom Common Annual Report 2023-2024

Approved by the PCC, March 18 2024

Vicar’s Report: Revd Rosemary Donovan

Worship

If the word worship denotes giving worth to something it’s right that the main focus of our activities is our worship of God. However, our vision includes *living well* with God, others, and ourselves. The greatest commandment tells us to love God with our heart, mind, and strength and to love our neighbours as ourselves. If all we did was gather in a holy huddle on Sunday’s and Wednesday’s that would not give honour to the awesome God who sacrificed all for us. James 2 states that faith without deeds is dead. Fortunately, our *living well* rule for life is a holistic discipleship program that advocates 24/7 Christianity.

All of our outreach and social activities whether they be Walking for Health, Wheels and Squeals, Alpha, Singalong Grease, or Earth Day each demonstrate something of what we believe in such as our care for mental wellbeing, family life, prayer and study, fun and the planet.

All of life is worship, nevertheless, the times when we gather to praise and celebrate the goodness of God is precious and valuable in itself and we are immensely grateful to all who contribute to our corporate life in whatever small or large way. The sheer numbers of people are not insignificant and testimony to the value and worth we have in each other that we operate as the Body of Christ because the things that unite us are greater than whatever may divide.

Our 10 am Communion remains our main act of worship and is an immensely rich and broad experience with good quality liturgy, music and preaching as well as creative opportunities to engage with God in meaningful ways. We have a faithful midweek congregation who value worship in a quieter service as well as many families who enjoy the monthly fellowship at the Source. After a period of consultation, training, and prayerful discernment we have transitioned Source into Bubble Church which launched in January with great enthusiasm. We hope to see sustained growth in families adopting this as their main act of worship.

Morning Prayer is offered regularly at 9am on weekdays and there are many other opportunities for alternative acts of worship at seasonal times as well as 5@5 which attract different people for fun, food and fellowship.



A particular highlight of our worship this year was hosting the Ordination of Esther as priest, which was a first for Christ Church. We were delighted to welcome Diocesan guests to this extra special celebration, which united the vocations of ministry and motherhood in the same service.

Church Development

We have sadly not made much progress with upgrading our facilities. Rising building costs alongside careful stewardship of resources has necessitated that the PCC prioritise needs. Currently, this means swapping focus from the hall to the church and the addition of a self-contained pod to include hospitality and toilet facilities, to enable the church to be hired independently from the hall. Full plans will be shared at the APCM. This means scaling back plans for the hall and landscaping so that it can be done in phases as funds become available and working with our architect and the DAC to improve sustainability of our buildings. To this end we have been put forward by the diocese to apply for a national Demonstrator Church grant that might cover costs that can improve our desires to be net carbon neutral.

Outreach

We have continued to partner with local schools, uniformed groups, CCUFC and the Little Hands Nursery as well as other local charities via CTiE. The Earth Day event saw many other local groups joining in to highlight concern for our planet. We also hosted a number of local crafts-people and charities at our Christmas Fair and were delighted to host a 2nd Age Concern concert in December.



The Missions team will report separately but we have been immensely grateful to our champions who keep us regularly informed on the charitable organisations we support both financially and prayerfully. We are also aware that many of our members volunteer at many other worthy projects in our

community such as Emerge, the Epsom and Ewell Foodbank and Citizens Advice.

Social Events

All of the 5@5 events have been fun occasions to invite family and friends to, but the Coronation, in May, of King Charles III was especially memorable. All guests got stuck into Coronation crafts, which included making crowns, sewing King Charles Cavaliers, and designing a banner to celebrate this unique historical event. All enjoyed with a superb afternoon tea!

The trip to Windsor in September was also greatly enjoyed. The splendid sunshine helped as we watched the pageantry of changing of the guards and got caught up in the excitement of the Royal borough. The self-guided tour of both Chapel and Castle was extremely informative. Many queued to see Queen Mary's dolls house and to pay their respects to our late Queen Elizabeth II laid to rest in St George's. The day concluded with a serene evensong where we had the privilege of seats in the Quire.

We topped the year off with Christ Church big quiz and fireworks on New Year's Eve.

Children and young people

When Esther returned from maternity leave she generously agreed to oversee this aspect of our ministry and to supervise a new worker, when appointed. Gill, Katharine, and Jenny have continued to nurture our young people on a Sunday morning and Rosemary coordinate the youth group and CC Cinema. It has been a joy to welcome new members and see them growing in confidence and faith and particularly to baptise and admit Kayla and Lilly May to Holy Communion at Christ the King. We look forward to their confirmation in due course following Youth Alpha.

After being inspired by a lockdown initiative at the Ascension, Balham, Esther led prayer meetings and a PCC discussion to enable us to become a partner Church. A small team went to training in November and we launch this new service in January. Many people generously donated towards the equipment needed and the Vicar and churchwardens have made a grant from the Kings Fund for ongoing costs. We look forward to seeing the fruit of this investment but have been encouraged by the initial response. Each service follows a simple format and is a lively mix of songs, puppets, and activity with families at in their own bubbles on the floor. There is a great sense of fun especially when the bubble machine blows, and the team of helpers is growing!



We are also pleased to announce the successful recruitment of Sofia Welsby as our new part time Children and youth worker beginning after Easter.

Eco Church

The small team has continued to reflect on small steps we can take to improve on our silver award. We have introduced toilet hippos and a swift box and enjoyed Earth Day at the end of April. Particular thanks to Ro who coordinates this event and continues to support Terracycle. A small amount was raised from the Clothes swap and the vicar using Vinted!

Discipleship: Revd Sue Curtis

'The life of the disciple is not about religious self-improvement but about the freedom of trusting God to be God and taking care of His creation' *Mark Mattes*

Discipleship is taken seriously at Christ Church and is supported by many facets of church life. There is no one-size-fits-all mentality. To grow in Christian commitment, as followers of Christ, is seen in the lives of individuals and in our corporate life. Our Christian calling is to embrace the transforming work of God in all we are and all we do.

Discipleship is not primarily about courses, projects and programs, but is relational: our relationship with God as a supreme creative force, as God in our human situation in Jesus, and embedded deep within our being in the Holy Spirit. This should inform our identity and our relations with others, seeing all as loved children of God.

Over the last few years, some of the faithful disciples in our congregation have died, become more frail or moved away; part of their legacy is the wisdom and patterns of Christian living that have become part of our way of life and our values. The joy is that we are seeing new people joining us, as valued members of our congregation, people of all ages and from a variety of backgrounds. They bring with them new hope, new life and fresh insight.

Discipleship is developed in our worship, our church life together and our sharing in outreach within our community. It is strengthened by working with other partners: for example Churches Together in Epsom (CTiE), work with schools and community groups and work with charitable organisations both globally and locally. It is facilitated by taking the Bible seriously, rooting all we do in prayer, engaging with the best church tradition and with contemporary society.

Our vicar, Rosemary, supported by Esther and the other members of the staff team, pastoral group, prayer ministry and PCC are robust and intentional in fostering discipleship. All who contribute to worship, administration, prayer and outreach, foster a culture of integrity and care where God's love is exemplified in our words and actions. There is undoubtedly much we can develop but there are reasons to be optimistic.

Sermons, music, liturgy, home groups, Growing Leaders Course, Alpha, Bubble Church, prayer groups, Youth Alpha, occasional courses in church or within the diocese, prayer ministry, MU group, casual conversations, preparations for baptisms, confirmation, weddings and funerals – all can foster discipleship. The church owes a debt to all who contribute to our church life by their leadership, prayer, presence and the offering of their time, talents, and resources.

For many the atmosphere of welcome we offer at Christ Church may well be the cementing or start of a Christian journey of commitment to following as disciples of Jesus. We need to remain a place of welcome and inclusion, where questions can be asked freely, and ideas shared honestly. This is the responsibility of all of us, as we learn and share together, joining in all that fosters breadth and depth within our church life. Perhaps 2024 is the year each of us can consider seriously how we can grow in Christian maturity and depth and help others to do the same. There is so much on offer where we can share and learn together. We have a responsibility to participate where we can.

Pastoral Care: Sue Matthews

The Pastoral Care Team continues to meet every 6 weeks to review and respond to Pastoral needs. The Ministerial team, Parish Safeguarding Officers attend the meetings, in addition to the lay members of the pastoral team. Prayer for those in need has continued through the prayer chain and intercessions in services. Prayer ministry is offered after the morning service, with at least two people available, who will pray with you, respecting confidentiality. All members of the prayer ministry team are trained and meet regularly with Rosemary for ongoing training and support. The Tea Club meets quarterly and is well supported. The Baptism team continue to work with families in preparation for, and after baptism. The weekly emailed Parish newsletter outlines how to seek pastoral support.

All members of the team are trained by the Guildford Diocese and also attend update courses including Domestic Abuse Awareness and Safeguarding Leadership. Current team members are Pastoral Assistants: Sue Matthews; Jo Wolfe Pastoral Secretary and Pastoral Visitor Jane Williams. The team expressed thanks to Devorah Burns, on her retirement, for her dedicated work over many years. More people are much needed for these roles. If you would like to join the Pastoral team or the Prayer Ministry team please speak to Sue Matthews.

Current contact details:

Sue Matthews - pastoralsue@christchurchepsom.org.uk

Jo Woolfe - pastoraljo@christchurchepsom.org.uk

Jane Williams - pastoraljane@christchurchepsom.org.uk

Missions: David Blacoe

Christ Church now directs its budgeted Missions Giving through five funded charities, which are supported for a five year period and have a dedicated Mission Champion. These are:-

- The Children's Society
- Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)
- Spinnaker
- Univida
- Vision Peoples in Mission (VPM)

Additionally in 2023, the church made a final donation to OrphanAID, as championed by Greg Edwards. Subsequently, he has stepped down from the Missions Group. The PCC recorded its grateful thanks for all the work by Greg, chairing the Group over a number of years.

Additionally one of the functions of the Missions Committee is to identify and request PCC approval to support charities requiring urgent funding from the Mission Emergency Fund. This year we distributed the following payments:

- £250 - Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network
- £250 - Red Cross appeal for Libyan Flood victims
- £250 - Red Cross appeal for Morocco victims
- £200 – UNiViDa Flood appeal

This year's collections at our nominated services (Harvest & Christmas) for specific charities were:

- At the Harvest service, £145 was collected for the Epsom Food Bank.
- At the Christmas Crib service, £473 was collected for Crisis.
- At the Christingle service, £80 was collected for The Children's Society.

During the year, we have been able to support our limited resources by promoting our Charities to the congregation through speaker invitations at the Sunday Communion service, to encourage personal commitment. We were fortunate to have excellent contributions from The Children's Society, CSW and UNiViDa and have been encouraged and grateful for dedicated sermon slots to promote the work and needs of our Mission Partners.

As well as activities related to our funded Mission Partners, as a church we have supported our Missions Partners who no longer receive budgeted funding from our church including the Christmas hamper collection for The Besom, and the Lent Appeal for the Bishop of Guildford's Community Fund.

Once again, we thank Christ Church PCC and congregation for their continued support for the Missions Group. *The Missions Group Champions*

Safeguarding: Leslie King

Christ Church's two Parish Safeguarding Officers are Les and Maureen King, with church warden Fay Wedlake providing support and supervision. Les is a member of the PCC which has a standing agenda item on Safeguarding at each PCC meeting. This agenda item allows the PCC to maintain oversight on all aspects of safeguarding. Les has provided PCC members with a comprehensive document covering their important role and responsibilities regarding safeguarding.

DBS Checks

Maureen's main role is to check on those in roles that require DBS checks, and to ensure they apply for a check if they have not had one, and reminding those who are already checked but who now need their 3 yearly renewal check. Maureen then follows up and verifies the details provided by applicants so the checks can be finalised and a DBS Certificate can be awarded to applicants.

PCC Meetings

Les spoke at the June 2023 PCC meeting about the importance of Safeguarding and vigilance for us all in Church communities. He gave examples from his former role as a Senior Police Officer and also of serious safeguarding issues taking place in Churches in recent years. He described an example of grooming of a whole congregation by an abuser who held a leadership role within their Church Community. This was a true story that was dramatized in a 4-part series BBC1 ("The Sixth Commandment"). Later Les spoke on a Sunday morning, encouraging the congregation to watch the programme.

Les also reported that a lot of work has been done improving the documentation and recording systems for oversight of DBS checks, safer recruitment and ongoing safeguarding training for individuals in keeping with current Diocesan requirements.

At the September 2023 PCC meeting Fay reported Christ Church has attained Level 3 for Safeguarding Standards on the Diocesan Safeguarding Dashboard. This is the highest level, which we plan to maintain through a rolling programme of fulfilling the requirements.

At the November 2023 PCC meeting the 16 PCC members present confirmed 'Our Safeguarding Pledge': "Our Promise to you, as the Church Leaders, is we will listen, hear, respect and believe and genuinely care for anyone who reports abuse to us."

Safeguarding Sunday and Christ Church's "Safeguarding Pledge"

Les King shared Christ Church's "Safeguarding Pledge" with the congregation on Safeguarding Sunday (19th November). He also designed a leaflet for all members of the congregation to take and read the pledge which includes the six principles that Christ Church leadership are committed to. Another leaflet was made available in response to the CofE's recently-published 'Five National Standards for Safeguarding'. These two leaflets were distributed on Safeguarding Sunday, and made available in the Church Lobby and included in the Parish Weekly Newsletter for the following week.

At the January 2024 PCC meeting Les was able to report there had been no safeguarding issues, apart from a single incident that was dealt with effectively at the Parish level and was not sufficiently serious to require escalation to the Diocesan level.

He also reported that safeguarding training and renewal of DBS checks is ongoing satisfactorily. He also stated the Diocesan Safeguarding Team had issued details of a new way for any individual to report any safeguarding concern to them, and ensured this was displayed on the Safeguarding notice area in the Church Lobby and Church Hall. The new telephone number is 01483 790379.

Level 3 for Safeguarding Standards and Safeguarding Hubs

An important aspect of Christ Church achieving the Level 3 for Safeguarding Standards is it gives access to the CofE "Safeguarding Hubs" (which are only available at Level 3). We can now access Stage 1 of the Hub, with Stages 2 and 3 still being developed. Each stage provides tools to help parishes meet all the CofE's safeguarding requirements. The three tools available at Stage 1 help with safer recruitment and people management. Future tools will help parishes with other areas of safeguarding. These tools are very useful. Les and Maureen recently took part in a very informative zoom meeting with the Diocesan team and other PSOs to learn more about the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard and the Safeguarding Hubs.

Publicity

Publicising safeguarding is a vital part of ensuring full awareness of it within the church. Christ Church makes real efforts to publicise safeguarding matters – much of which is covered above, and posters and leaflets are displayed in the entrance lobby, the church hall and the vestry.

In Summary

Fay, Les, Maureen and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team are all happy that Christ Church is progressing well in all the requirements of safeguarding (publicity, training, DBS checks etc.) that are placed upon us as a parish.

Church Governance: Jane Williams PCC Secretary

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023 -2024

Together with:

- The statement of financial activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31st December 2023
- The balance sheet as at 31st of December 2023

Christ Church, Epsom Common, is an Anglican Church in the Diocese of Guildford. The postal address is Christ Church, Christ Church Road, Epsom KT19 8NE. Registered Charity number 1127945.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Under Church of England legislation, the PCC is responsible for collaborating with the incumbent in promoting, in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Worship matters are for the incumbent. The PCC is responsible for these premises: Christ Church, its Church Hall and the Curate's house at 278 The Greenway, Epsom.

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to the House of Bishop's guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

PCC membership during 2023-2024

Ex-officio PCC members

Clergy	Vicar	The Revd Rosemary Donovan	Chair
	Curate	The Revd Esther Hunt	From 07/22
	Associate Minister	The Revd Sue Curtis (OLM)	
	Reader Licensed Lay Minister	Berwick Curtis (LLM)	
Churchwardens	Andrew Hards yr 5	Chair Premises	Lay Vice-Chair
	Fay Wedlake yr 2	PCC Designated CW for safeguarding	Lay Vice-Chair

Elected PCC members

Additional Roles	Name	Year appointed
Co-opted April 2022, Heating Team, Missions	David Blacoe	2022 1yr
Premises, Heating Team	Tom Ellinor	2022 1yr
Deanery Synod, PCC Safeguarding	Leslie King	2022 3yr
Finance committee, Treasurer	Nigel Daniels	2021 3yr
Merry Mowers	Daniel Korboe	2021 3yr
Deanery Synod	Shirleyann Dartnell	2022 3yr
Children and Families	Lucy Warren	2021 3yr
PCC sec, BRC, E&O, Pastoral Team	Jane Williams	2020 October 3yr
Children and Families	Clair Wright	2020 October 3yr
Deanery Synod, Children and Families	Gill Glasspool	2022 3yr
BRC, Christ Church United Rep	David Wedlake	2022 3yr

Review of PCC business from April 2023

The PCC met 8 times following the 2023 APCM, with an average attendance of 83%.

The PCC is supported by the Business and Resources Committee (the required standing committee with some additional delegated powers). The BRC has met on 5 occasions. Other groups met regularly, (each including PCC and non-PCC members), dealing with: Finance; Premises; Missions and Giving; Evangelism and Outreach; Environmental/ Eco and Children and Youth Support Team. All report to the PCC at regular intervals. Each group is chaired by Revd Donovan or a PCC member.

Seven days in advance of each PCC meeting, the agenda is displayed on the church noticeboard (a mandatory requirement). To keep the congregation informed, a summary of each PCC meeting is circulated in the following weekly Parish newsletter by email. This is also displayed on the PCC notice board along with the draft minutes of each meeting.

Safeguarding is an agenda item at every PCC meeting. The whole church community is responsible for safeguarding. Les and Maureen King, Parish Safeguarding Officers and DBS Validators, have worked diligently to keep up-to-date with new developments and requirements. Fay Wedlake is the designated CW for oversight of safeguarding.

The PCC also acknowledged the dedicated work of the Premises Committee and the heating team members. Their work has led to an improvement in the church heating. They continue to investigate possibilities for the future heating system.

We have spent time discussing the necessary maintenance to the church fabric, issues related to the Scout Hall lease and the redevelopment of both the Parish Hall and Curate's residence. The latter is now completed.

We thank the Finance Team for their diligent work through the year. Nigel Daniels has embraced the role of Treasurer and is well supported by the team: Alan Frame; Malcolm Channing, Assistant Treasurer; June Skinner, Chair and Anne Sturton.

The PCC thanked Devorah Burns, on her retirement for her work, over many years, as a Pastoral Assistant. We also thanked Greg Edwards for his role on Missions over several years.

We thank retiring PCC members Lucy Warren, Daniel Korboe and Clair Wright for their valued contribution over the past 3 years.

Hall Bookings have increased this year. The Hall is used weekdays by Little Hands Nursery. We now have regular bookings with a local Dance School on two evenings a week.

Two new administrative assistants were appointed in July 2023. We welcomed Laura Sims and Laura Taylor working together as a job shares, covering 25 hours. Laura Sims is currently kindly covering Laura Taylor's maternity leave. Both have embraced their roles with enthusiasm and efficiency. The PCC has supported the appointment of a part time Children and Youth Worker, Sofia Welsby. We look forward to welcoming Sofia to the Children and Youth Ministry team on April 15.

Several PCC members attended The Church Growth Conference in November 2023, with a focus on reaching out to Children and Families and the wider community.

PCC agendas have included a regular review, throughout the year, of the Church Development Plan and Parish Needs Process. We feel very much that we are working well as a PCC and congregation, moving towards achieving the aims of "Growing Community, Growing Disciples, and Growing Diversity" set out in the Development Plan.

Report on the Fabric of the Church and its other Properties

2023 – 2024, as at 29 February 2024

Andrew Hards, Fay Wedlake: Church Wardens.

Introduction

Generally, the Church is in good condition but due to aging and deterioration of some of the construction elements mainly of the high level stonework and the heating system, significant costly works are anticipated within the next few years. This is consistent with the age and construction of the church building, its services and boundary walls.



The upkeep of the church, hall, grounds and 278 The Greenway (the Curate's house) are overseen by the small but dedicated Premises Committee. The Committee manages a planned maintenance programme to ensure that the small things are dealt with in a timely manner and record when everything has been completed. This includes routine items such as servicing and safety checks of heating installations, fire extinguishers, electrical installations and equipment, fire alarms, organ and woodworm checks. These are an important element of the Health and Safety of the church and hall.

As in previous years, many checks and repairs continued to be carried out in-house, saving expenditure. The wardens would like church members to note the continued hard work, advice and dedication of Richard Martin.

Thanks must again go to the teams of volunteers who work hard and often unseen with the upkeep including the church cleaners, the flower team and the Merry Mowers who have evolved into a "Whats App "connected gardening group.

An autumn clean-up day on 30th September was well attended. Thanks to all who took part.

Thanks also to Martin Shipton for continuing to deal with insurance issues. The church building is insured by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group in the sum of £17,950,000 with a £500 excess. The hall is similarly insured for £3,330,000 with a £250 excess. EIG normally apply an inflation-indexed increase to these sums at this time of year.

Unscheduled repairs were made to replace electric heaters in the bell ringers' room: £831.60 inc VAT

Anticipated future major repairs:

Stonework

As reported at the last APCM, previous gutter replacement allowed a close examination of the roof-edge parapet wall coping stones by Andy and Robert Shaw our quinquennial architect. Parts of the stonework are clearly spalling, due to weathering and frost damage over the years. The condition is such that repair could well be a requirement of the next Quinquennial Report which is due this summer. Robert considers that it may well be possible to repair the stonework in situ rather than sourcing complete new stones but a skilled stone mason will still be required. He has experience of this type of work at other churches. His ball-park figure was in the region of £50,000.

The PCC was advised and agreed to follow Robert's suggested likely future phased course of action. This involves assessing the degree of damage and drafting a Statement of Need (both already considered) for inclusion in an application for DAC approval. From initial discussion with the DAC secretary it is likely that repairs can be carried out with Archdeacon's consent rather than a full faculty. After that, obtaining quotations, with provision for inflation (potential contractors have been identified), and then in Robert's words "draw breath" to consider funding and grant applications.

Heating system and associated items

This is known to be of limited life in terms of the boiler, radiators and pipework and is inefficient by modern standards. Problems have occurred with pilot light failure resulting in the boiler failing to

fire up on several occasions. This was rectified, with difficulty, because parts were difficult to source and required adapting on site.

A heating team has been set up to investigate alternative replacement installations; ways of making the best of the existing system; and other items such as draught-proofing. As a result of some in-house fettling, the system is now running as well as it can. Particular thanks to Roger Wedlake and Richard Martin.

This leads us to comment on an application for Christ Church to be chosen as a **Net Zero Demonstrator Church**. This is a national scheme and for successful applicants, ultimately opens up potential funding for projects to help churches achieve “zero carbon”. This can include new zero carbon heating systems and solar panel (PV) installations; the scheme applies to both main church buildings. The good news is that we reached to stage one, having been chosen as one of five churches in the diocese to go forward out of over twenty initial applicants. Stage one gives access to a free Technical Advisory Service, free Fundraising Consultancy support and a cash grant of up to £15,000 + VAT towards professional fees. We are applying for stage two funding which gives access to up to £50,000 for actual works. Selection will be on a merit basis and a decision should be known around April-May. If funding is not available this time, there is a good chance of additional funds being available in 2025. Participating churches have to agree to be potential published case studies. We are to some extent guinea pigs in a pilot scheme to help the Church of England achieve its aim of net zero carbon by 2030.

Other items

Regular servicing of the heating system, organ and organ blower plus safety checks of fire extinguishers were carried out, as normal.

The Hall

The main foul drains (toilets and kitchen) required frequent un-blocking. A CCTV inspection revealed several areas of deformation and tree root penetration requiring excavation and replacement. Fortunately our insurers agreed to meet the full cost (not disclosed by them) other than the excess. The work was completed in June 2023 by their appointed contractor Auger and is covered by a guarantee.

The Grounds

The condition of the flint boundary walls was mentioned in the 2019 Quinquennial Report and reported for the following APCM. They are extensive and aging with several areas of deterioration and varying amounts of lean requiring regular monitoring and represent a future liability in terms of expenditure. They will be looked at closely as part of the quinquennial architect’s inspection this summer. Isolated damage, possibly vehicle, impact to the wall by the car park was repaired in July 2023 at a cost of £357.60 no VAT

278 The Greenway (The Curate House)

The fabric reports for the two previous APCMs advised that the house had received little in the way of improvement for some time and had relatively low kerb appeal compared with other houses near-by. As previously reported, the PCC were fully engaged in the consideration and approval of

improvements and alterations to make the house a better place to live as well as enhancing the market and rental values.

Work started in March 2023 with practical completion in May and the defects period ending in November. We should all be grateful to Esther and James for agreeing to vacate and for putting up with disruption to their lives especially with new baby Gabriel.

The main works were:

- Improvement of the awkward layout of the bathroom and WC with associated re fitting.
- Conversion of the integral garage to give a utility room, cloakroom and office.
- Creation of a contemporary open plan kitchen/family/dining room.
- New boiler and front door.
- Improved parking.

The PCC was kept updated during the project, having already been involved in contractor appointment and agreement of the cost. The detailed design, specification, planning and building regulations issues and contractor search plus project management including site inspections and payment authorisation was handled by an architect Annette Peters. The work was carried out by Concept 73 Developments. Annette proved to be a great asset when problems were encountered, including disputes with the contractor. The final cost with fees (architect, structural engineer) and VAT as advised in Finance Report was £165,580 (building works £158,859 with VAT)

This is more than anticipated (building works £136,418 with VAT) issues arose as work progressed such as drainage and structural engineer's requirements plus cost of materials. Annette worked hard to keep the variations down as far as possible.

Esther's husband James very kindly agreed to arrange the decorative work for which the PCC is very grateful and again for their co-operation and willingness to vacate the house and arrange alternative accommodation. Thanks also to David Blacoe for helping facilitate on-going fence repairs.

278 The Greenway: before and after



Report on the Goods and Ornaments 2023-4

As reported to the last APCM at the beginning of February 2023, the church had an intruder. There was no sign of a break in and no known missing keys. The safe lock was drilled out and opened but nothing was taken, no signs of ransacking or vandalism. The Police and insurers were notified, door lock barrels and tumblers were changed as a precaution. Richard subsequently kindly arranged replacement of the safe. This cost £2,690 with £1,838 met by insurance. The difference was the excess plus upgrade to an electronic lock to avoid obtaining costly multiple additional keys.

Out of interest, following an arrest by Thames Valley Police a repeat church burglar was convicted of theft from churches and a church school including Surrey, Andy had provided a witness statement in connection with this case.

Otherwise, there is nothing to report. Andy Hards 29/02/2024

Deanery Synod Report: Gill Glasspool

It's been another excellent year of information sharing and discussion, with Revd Rosemary as Area Dean chairing our meetings. Attendance has been good, with representatives present from the Deanery's churches. Christ Church Epsom Common was represented by Shirleyann Dartnell, Gill Glasspool and Leslie King.

The Synod met three times, in June and October 2023 and in February 2024. Each meeting begins and ends with prayer and there is sometimes a reflective song too. At the first meeting of the year's cycle, in June, we also shared a special Communion to mark the appointment of new representatives to Deanery Synod.

A brief synopsis of the main business of each meeting is as follows:

15th June 2023, at St. Paul's Church, Nork

Revd Alex Stevens welcomed everybody to St Paul's and gave a brief update on current activities in the Parish.

Rosemary reported on membership of the Deanery Leadership Team, new members of the Deanery Synod and on current vacancies/appointments and there was an update from the Treasurer.

Focus Topic: Sharing Faith Stories Rosemary interviewed a panel of four Synod members about their personal faith. Questions posed covered a range of themes, including: earliest memories of faith, a favourite scripture passage or life verse and who in the Old Testament would you most like the opportunity to speak to? These questions prompted the sharing of personal stories about how each panel member came to faith and the impact their faith has had on their lives. This discourse was followed by a lively and interesting time of general discussion.

The session was very engaging - it was interesting to hear so many diverse stories of witness. The conversations very effectively demonstrated how we as Christians should be ready to explain our faith to others, in an encouraging and non-threatening way. It was suggested that sharing faith stories in our churches could be a powerful focus for services and meetings.

4th October 2023, at St. John's, Stoneleigh

Revd Geoff Andrew led us in prayer and worship and then provided an update on St John's Stoneleigh. This included news that construction of a new footbridge over the railway line (which essentially divides Stoneleigh in half) was underway. The new bridge would have lift access and provide an easy route across the railway to the church and church centre; hopefully this would make the church more easily accessible for many so this was an exciting development.

During the normal notices, Rosemary mentioned she had recently attended the consecration of Bishop Paul at Westminster Abbey. She now looked forward to welcoming Paul on behalf of the

clergy at a special evensong at the Cathedral the following week.

Focus Topic 1: St. Martin's Epsom Motion with written ballot Rosemary then introduced a motion proposed by the Parochial Church Council of St. Martin of Tours with St. Stephen on the Downs, Epsom, acknowledging that the topic was likely to be emotive and potentially divisive. The motion, presented by Dr Howard Bluett, read:

The Parochial Church Council of St Martin of Tours with St Stephen on the Downs, Epsom and the Epsom Deanery Synod believing that marriage is a covenantal relationship between two people affirming their decision to live together in life-long faithful companionship and mutual care whatever their circumstances are or may become urges the Church of England to amend Canon B5 on Marriage by replacing the word Matrimony with Marriage and removing references to gender and the purpose of marriage which is procreation as has already been done with the Marriage Service in Common Worship in order that people of the same gender may have an identical marriage service to those of opposite genders as the purposes of marriage with the one exception of procreation are not gender specific.

CANON B30 below:

1. The Church of England affirms, according to our Lord's teaching, that marriage is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better for worse, till death them do part, of one man with one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side, for the procreation and nurture of children, for the hallowing and right direction of the natural instincts and affections, and for the mutual society, help and comfort which the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

would then read:

1. The Church of England affirms, according to our Lord's teaching, that marriage is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better for worse, till death them do part, of two people, to the exclusion of all others on either side, for the nurture of children, for the hallowing and right direction of the natural instincts and affections, and for the mutual society, help and comfort which the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

Arguments in support of and against the motion were eloquently made and carefully minuted. It was explained that Synod members would have four options to vote for:

I agree with the motion and want to cascade to Guildford Diocesan Synod.

1. I agree with the motion but do not want to cascade further awaiting General Synod's LLF process.
2. I disagree with the motion.
3. I abstain.

For the motion to be carried there would need to be a 50% majority in favour. The ballot was anonymous and votes were counted by the Lay Chair and Deanery Secretary.

The Result:

Agree and Cascade	13 votes
Agree and Wait	5 votes
Disagree	9 votes
Abstain	8 votes

Sharing the results, Peter Harvey, Lay Chair, noted that, as the 50% threshold had not been reached, the motion was not carried. However, it was observed that the result and discussions indicated that a future discussion about this issue at Synod would be beneficial.

Focus Topic 2: Christians Against Poverty (CAP) update Harry Lamaison encouraged churches to make referrals to our nearest centre now at St Barnabas. This service was being provided by Howell Hill on behalf of the Deanery. Over 200 referrals had been received since the Centre opened with more than 60 people having become debt-free following their visit.

Harry also recommended the Money Course for those struggling financially, citing alarming examples of the choices people in poverty are forced to make.

Focus Topic 3: Parish Needs Plan Rosemary outlined the four priority areas which had been identified as part of the Parish Needs Process (PNP):

- Children and Youth
- Small Groups
- Stewardship
- Community

Members were invited to split into groups to discuss what they would like from the Deanery and its meetings in future, based around these four areas. The following comments were noted:

1. Lay Children and Youth Workers do not feel supported by the Diocese. Could we explore ways in which we can share best practice and offer support and resources at Deanery Level?
2. Working together to address stewardship would be beneficial.
3. Work on building a Deanery of faith, and fellowship and stewardship will follow.
4. Focus on increased footfall – can we work on sharing best practice in this area?

1st February, 2024 at All Saints, West Ewell

Revd John Marrow welcomed everyone and led a time of worship. He talked through activities at All Saints, commenting that discipleship was key and referencing a number of events run by the church such as Youth Café for secondary school children which takes place once a week after school.

Rosemary updated those present on staffing updates and current vacancies and there was a short Treasurer's report: all were delighted to hear that owing to a healthy cash balance, no Deanery subscription was being sought in 2024.

Focus Topic: Community Engagement Revd Paul Dever of St. Paul's/Barnabas reported on how it had come about that St. Paul's Howell Hill had joined with St. Barnabas to help St. Barnabas continue to serve its community – St. Barnabas had been threatened with closure in 2019. The two main aims for St. Barnabas were to: revitalise Sunday church for young families; and to build a community hub at St. Barnabas. Importantly, St Barnabas' significant partnerships with local mental health

organisations (e.g. the former Hospital sites, Sunnybank and Love Me Love My Mind) and its focus on supporting the wellbeing of everyone in the local community needed to be preserved.

Main achievements for St. Barnabas to date were:

- Redesigning the worship space and introducing AV for services.
- Rebuilding a community café.
- Developing a strong community hub. Through the creation of the Community Hub, many local projects and charities had become involved in the life of St Barnabas: a Deanery Christians Against Poverty centre had been set up; there's an Advice Café (where people can access help in a welcoming environment); Action for Carers meets weekly; The Good Company runs a Food Bank on Fridays; and a school holidays lunch club runs twice a week during the school holidays. In addition, the established links with mental health organisations continue.

Paul spoke enthusiastically about how churches can engage with and serve their communities by providing valuable local services. He would be delighted to visit churches across the Deanery to share ideas and approaches. In particular, there was a need in the Deanery for a local GP Hub.

Victoria Ashdown, Diocese Mission Enabler, then addressed Deanery members, urging churches to consider engaging with their community more through providing help and services. There are currently 14.4 million people living in poverty in the UK. Reaching out to the poor or marginalised is a Christian act and a really good way of regaining people's trust in the Church of England – a recent survey showed that only 35% of the UK population trusts the Church, compared with 78% trusting the NHS and 50% trusting the Bank of England!

We broke into groups to consider local opportunities for working collaboratively in our unique parishes with organisations already present, e.g. doctor's surgeries, and began to map the many local places, services and initiatives that were already available and in which we might join in.

Victoria suggested surveying our congregations to find out what assets, knowledge and talents we might access and suggested some easy collaboration with other organisations e.g. setting up a Hear Here drop in clinic. (Hear Here is a Diocese of Guildford project in partnership with Sight for Surrey and the NHS, where NHS audiology trained volunteers provide community-based hearing aid maintenance. A Hear Here Clinic, held in a Church or Community building, offers basic hearing aid maintenance and advice to support hearing aid wearers to get the best from their devices.) Through offering such services we can demonstrate the love of Christ and, potentially, also build up trust and faith in our local communities.

In conclusion, I hope this report demonstrates how at Deanery Synod we have engaged in really useful discussions this year which have the potential to inspire valuable and informed action and outreach. Our meetings have also served to inform and build up good working relationships across the Deanery.

Finance: Nigel Daniels Treasurer

Introduction:

During the year ending 31 December 2023, Christ Church received income, including legacies, of £273,156 (versus £ 242,910 in 2022) whilst expenditure totalled £345,206 (versus £250,624 in 2022): a deficit over the course of the year of £72,050 versus a deficit of £7,714 in 2022.

The main reason for the deficit was the investment made in upgrading the Curate's House, at a cost of £165,580. The deficit would have been greater but for the gratefully received legacies of £91,205 (2022 legacies: £85,194). If these 2 items are excluded, we would have been broadly in balance and perhaps this gives a better idea of "everyday" expenditure and income during 2023. However there was very little spent on the church and we were not employing a Youth and Family Worker (YFW).

In 2024, due to the quinquennial inspection of the church and the salary of a YFW, we expect general expenses to rise by £70,000. The balance sheet at the end of 2023 records the total net worth of Christ Church as £560,344 compared with £626,784 at the end of 2022.

Planned Giving and Other Income

Christ Church continues to be heavily dependent on voluntary financial contributions from our members, most of who donate via standing orders through their bank, for which we are eternally grateful. Standing orders generated £75,552 which was an increase of £1,305 over that received in 2022. We were able to claim from HMRC a total of £20,248 in gift aid.

Planned Giving forms a major source of our income. If you have not already done so, please consider joining our Planned Giving Scheme.

One off donations totalled £12,979 (£12,049 in 2022) some of which was gift aided. £4,970 of this was raised during the Stewardship campaign in October 2023.

Income from Church Hall hire increased, with £31,166 being generated (£22,878 in 2022), including the income from Little Hands nursery. Income from the hiring the Church was £1,130.

Investment interest on cash balances held with NatWest and Churches, Charities and Local Authorities Investment Management Limited (CCLA) amounted to £20,173 (£6,324 in 2022). This was due to the sharp rise in interest rates during the year.

There was £7,975 rent received for Greenways in 2022 but nothing for 2023. In 2023 £7,237 was received in grants. £6,237 was for reclaimed VAT in relation to replacement guttering work undertaken in 2022. £1,000 was from the Diocese for "Energy Rebate".

Legacy income of £91,205 was gratefully received.

Legacy income has been vital in keeping our Church solvent.

It also enables us to undertake capital projects, make improvements and repairs. So please consider leaving a legacy in your will.

A gift to the Church is normally deducted from the value of an estate when inheritance tax is calculated thereby reducing the amount of inheritance tax payable.

There are some leaflets on legacy giving at the back of the Church. More information is available at www.churchlegacy.org.uk. Or by phoning the information line on 08445 870875.

It is always important to take independent advice over such matters.

Expenditure

As mentioned above the bulk of expenditure was on the curate's House amounting to £165,580.

We have been partially protected on the costs of utilities as there are some fixed rate contracts in place for some of these utilities. These will need to be renewed at the end of this year and we are currently under discussion over this.

Our Parish Share was £86,621. This supports our clergy and ministry, as well as being part of the support to those parishes in the Diocese who are suffering from reduced income and are less well blessed with funds than ourselves. The Parish Share is expected to rise to £89,155 this year.

The AVL project was undertaken in 2018 and completed during 2019 and was treated as a capital expense. Depreciation on this, and a photocopier purchased in 2019, is over 5 years and is included in the year at £31,199. This depreciation charge will be £11,600 for 2024 after which the assets will be fully depreciated.

Missions

Donations to our Missions partners amounted to £7,250 and included £2500 carried forward from 2022.

Funds

The General Fund at the year-end is £69,361 whilst the Living Well Fund is £467,003.

Investments

In November 2018, £30,000 was invested in the Charities Ethical Investment Fund (COIF) managed by Churches, Charities and Local Authorities Investment Management Limited (CCLA). This was valued at £44,772 at the end of 2023, as against £39,162 at the end of 2022.

Unrealised gains and losses represent the movement in market values during the year and are credited or charged to the statement of financial activities based on the market value at the year end.

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA)

These financial statements were approved by the PCC of Christ Church, Epsom Common on April 9 2024 and signed on its behalf by the Revd Rosemary Donovan.

The Income and Expenditure Analysis for 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 and proposed budget have not been included in this report. A print out or email copy of this report is available on request from PCC Secretary Jane Williams pcc@christchurchepsom.org.uk.

The accounts also do not incorporate the financial statements of the Vicar and Churchwardens' Trust, which handles the legacies from Eden and Dennis King and also Mildred Freeman.

Statement of Financial Activities for the period 1 Jan 23 -31 Dec 23

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Incoming resources					
Incoming resources from generated funds	-	-	-	-	-
Voluntary income	205,654	-	-	205,654	196,315
Activities for generating funds	4,491	-	-	4,491	2,279
Investment income	20,173	-	-	20,173	14,299
Incoming resources from charitable activities	35,294	-	-	35,294	26,353
Other incoming resources	7,544	-	-	7,544	3,663
Total income	273,156	-	-	273,156	242,910
Resources used					
Cost of generating funds	506	-	-	506	384
Charitable activities	344,459	-	-	344,459	250,201
Governance costs	241	-	-	241	38
Total expenditure	345,206	-	-	345,206	250,624
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	(72,050)	-	-	(72,050)	(7,714)
Transfers:					
Gross transfers between funds - in	93,935	-	-	93,935	191,642
Gross transfers between funds - out	(93,935)	-	-	(93,935)	(191,642)
Other recognised gains / losses					
Gains/losses on investment assets	5,610	-	-	5,610	(4,817)
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	(66,440)	-	-	(66,440)	(12,531)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	626,784	-	-	626,784	639,315
Total funds carried forward	560,344	-	-	560,344	626,784
Represented by					
Unrestricted	69,361	-	-	69,361	24,687
General fund					
Church & Hall Fund	3,783	-	-	3,783	2,335
Curate's House Fund	4,614	-	-	4,614	82,259
Fixed Assets	14,534	-	-	14,534	54,405
Living Well Fund	467,003	-	-	467,003	460,799
Missions Appeals Fund	1,049	-	-	1,049	2,299
Restricted	560,344	-	-	560,344	626,784
Total funds	560,344	-	-	560,344	626,784

Christ Church Epsom Common Detailed Balance Sheet

	As at 31/12/2023	As at 31/12/2022
1000: 278 The Greenway	2,935	2,935
1100: Equipment	1,908	3,816
1200: Audio, Visual, Lighting	9,691	38,982
Total Fixed assets	14,534	45,733
3200: Nat West Current account	275	100
3205: Nat West Reserve account	47,902	30,978
3220: Lloyds Bank Fees Account	1,839	1,839
3230: CBF Deposit Fund	447,599	503,987
3240: Investments	44,772	39,162
3260: Floats	100	100
3270: Sundry Debtors	7,394	4,900
Z05: Accounts Receivable	-	-
ZZZ08: Prepayments	-	-
Total Current assets	549,879	581,065
0: .	-	-
3650: Uncleared Cheques	-	-
3680: Utilities Creditor	-	-
3690: Sundry Creditors	-	-
6699: Agency collections	975	14
Z04: Accounts Payable	3,094	-
ZZZ09: Accruals	-	-
Total Liabilities	4,069	14
Net Asset surplus (deficit)	560,344	626,784
Excess/(deficit) to date	(72,050)	(7,714)
Z01: Starting balances	626,784	639,315
Z02: Gains/(losses) on investment assets	5,610	(4,817)
Total Reserves	560,344	626,784

Represented by Funds

General (Unrestricted)	69,361	24,687
Designated	490,983	602,097
Restricted	-	-
Total	560,344	626,784

Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Church Accounting Regulations 2006, together with applicable accounting standards and the SORP 2015. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law.

They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

Funds

Designated Funds are part of the unrestricted funds which the PCC has earmarked for a particular project or use, without restricting or committing the funds legally. The designation may be cancelled by the PCC if it later decides not to proceed or continue with the use or project for which the funds were designated.

Unrestricted Funds are General funds, which can be used for PCC ordinary purposes.

Incoming Resources

Voluntary income, including donations, gifts, legacies and grants are recognised when there is an entitlement certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis. Income derived from events is recognised as earned and is accounted for gross.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Grants and donations are accounted for when paid over or when awarded if that award creates a binding or constructive obligation on the PCC.

The Diocesan Parish Share is accounted for when due.

Fixed Assets

Consecrated land and buildings and movable church furnishings

Consecrated and beneficed property is excluded from the accounts by s.96 (2) (a) of the Charities Act 1993. The curate's house is included at the original cost. No value is placed on movable church furnishings held by the churchwardens held in special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal, since the PCC considers this to be inalienable property. All expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated or benefice buildings and movable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the SOFA.

Other fixtures, fittings and office equipment and individual items costing £5000 or less are not capitalised.

Payments to Trustees

There were no Payments to Trustees during the year other than for goods or services purchased by Trustees in the course of their duty on behalf of Christ Church.

Independent examiner's report to the PCC of Christ Church, Epsom Common

I report to the PCC (the trustees of Registered Charity 1127945) on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023, as set out on the pages attached.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Douglas Slade
33 Pine Walk, Banstead, Surrey

5th April 2024



PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH EPSOM COMMON

Registered Charity No 1127945

Vestry Meeting 16 April 2023: Minutes

Held at 10am, integrated with Parish Communion. Chaired by the Vicar, the Revd Rosemary Donovan

The meeting was held publicly in church and live-streamed on Zoom (as approved by the Diocese). All votes included both those present and those joining via Zoom.

(Open to all Electoral Roll Members and every resident of the Parish)

1. Minutes of the Vestry Meeting held on 24 April 2022 were approved, as previously circulated via website, weekly newsletter and hardcopy in church from March 31 2023
2. Election of Churchwardens

There were nominations for the two Churchwarden positions.

- Andrew Hards, proposed by Avril Shipton, seconded by Ruth Grint was appointed to his 5th term
- Fay Wedlake, proposed by Hazel Rose, seconded by David Blacoe was appointed to her 2nd term

Rosemary expressed thanks for their willingness to undertake these roles and thanked them for their work over the previous twelve months. Congregation responded with a round of applause in recognition of their work.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 16 April 2023: Minutes

(Open to all Electoral Roll Members)

1. Attendance

The service was held in Church and live-streamed. 62 adults (age over 16) were present in Church, of whom 56 were eligible to vote. Six children (under 16) were present. 10 adults were present via zoom. Apologies were received from Devorah Burns, Robert Burns and Malcolm Channing. Those attending via Zoom included Anne Chandler, Anne Fraser, Sue and Berwick Curtis (in New Zealand), Diane Mazzacaro, Mike Reeves, Margaret Carter, Avril Shipton, Sheila Frame and Caroline Daniels.

2. **Minutes of the APCM, 24 April 2022**, included in the 2023 annual report as circulated via website, weekly newsletter and hardcopy in church (from March 31 2023) were approved

3. **Electoral Roll:** Report by the Electoral Roll Officer, Martin Shipton.

The Church Electoral Roll is the foundation of the structure of synodical government in the Church of England. Like the national electoral roll, membership confers certain voting rights and lists names and addresses of all members, although only the names are publicly available. Only those whose names are on the Electoral Roll are eligible for election to the PCC and Synods. At last year's

meeting I reported an Electoral Roll membership of 149 people. This year has seen the addition of 8 people but we have lost 3 members. So membership now stands at 154.

The number of men on the Roll has increased slightly and there has been a small increase in the number of people on the roll living outside the parish.

2022 – 2023 In parish 57.1%; Out of parish 42.9%

2021 – 2022 In parish 59.7%; Out of parish 40.3%

This past year has seen the death of several members of our Church Family and from our Electoral Roll: John Wilkinson, Diana Tear, Annette Pawson

Former members and those not on the Electoral Roll: Margaret Challis, Doreen Donohue, Susan Bull, Wendy Rowland, Patience Morris, Lorraine Abraham

Martin invited the congregation to stand to pause for a moment to remember them.

All are sadly missed and we thank God for our memories of them and all that they gave to us.

4. **Deanery Synod Report.** Contained in Annual report: Approved

5. **PCC Report.** Contained in Annual Report: Approved

6. **Verbal Finance Report** by Treasurer Alan Frame.

Financial Statements for year ending 31 December 2022 as contained in 2023 annual report: Approved

Alan reported a deficit of £93,000 for the year ending December 2022, which excludes £85,000 from the two legacies received in 2022. Pledged giving, the regular giving by Church members, has reduced by £9,000, largely due to deaths, people relocating and the impact of Covid-19. The cost of necessary repairs to the Parish Hall and Greenway Residence, together with replacement of Church guttering, repairs to masonry and the generally rising costs have taken their toll. Some savings have been made but not enough to balance the budget. The daily church operational costs in 2022 amounted to £350 per day.

The balance sheet looks healthy because Christ Church had received generous legacies totalling £680,000 over the past 10 years. In the previous 10 years, it received £3,500. These legacies have supported the running costs of the Church and enabled improvements to be made. Otherwise, Alan commented, the Church would not have survived financially.

The budget report, with full analysis of income and expenditure in 2022 and budget for 2023, is available by emailing: pcc@christchurchepsom.org.uk.

The next 12 months' balance sheet will be less healthy, due to funds spent on improvements to the Greenway Residence in 2023.

Alan shared how much he had enjoyed his role as Treasurer over the last 23 years. He announced that Nigel Daniels will be taking over as Treasurer from today. During the Financial Report, Alan addressed questions from the congregation, related to finance, and submitted in advance of the meeting.

Questions from Martin Shipton

a) *Although we are fortunate to have significant legacy cash in the bank in recent years, expenditure has significantly exceeded income. What steps is the PCC taking to overcome this shortfall and when does it expect to return to a break even budget?*

In response, Alan Frame made the following suggestions to address this:

- An increase in pledged giving
- A stewardship campaign, for later in the year
- A review of the policy on legacies
- Applying for grants, where possible, for any improvements /developments for capital projects
- Increasing income from lettings, especially in view of anticipated improvements to assets of the Parish Hall and Greenway Residence.
- Alan expressed the hope that a return to a balanced budget be achieved within the next 3 years

b) *Missions' giving has been cut back and the number of societies reduced for this coming year. What is the PCC policy going forward on support for our Mission Partners and their financial support?*

Response from Alan Frame

Alan felt this was a matter for the PCC to decide, dependent on future income.

Questions from David Blacoe

The following clarifications on the "Analysis of Income and Expenditure plus Budgets" are requested:-

c) *Why is the 'Clergy House Maintenance fund' shown as 2023 expenditure when it is clearly a capital project for depreciation over a few years? Could this be covered in part through a secured loan on the property?*

Response from Alan Frame:

Alan explained £85,000 derived from the two legacies received in 2022 had been allocated to the Greenway Development Fund. The additional cost of the Greenaway Residence development will be met from the Living Well fund created through previous legacies. The finance team considered the implications of depreciating this project and concluded that there was no advantage in depreciating this project. Christ Church, as a charity would receive no tax advantage, unlike a corporate company. The duration of the depreciation would be highly debatable and cannot be done over short term, for example over 20-30 years. It made sense to pay for the project from legacy funds.

d) *Is the budget of £15,000 for Little Hands' hire of the Hall anywhere near a commercial rate? This looks to be poor revenue for significant annual usage.*

Response from Alan Frame:

The Finance team has looked at this on several occasions and concluded that the viability of Little Hands is very precarious with decreasing numbers of children enrolled. It was felt that £15,000 was a significant amount to receive annually and increasing the hire fee would jeopardise the financial viability of the nursery.

e) *Why has the budget component of 'Interest' significantly reduced from 2022, when the bank rate has risen so much?*

Response from Alan Frame:

The finance team, in planning the budget, took into account the likely spending on the Greenway Residence, to be in the order of £150,000 including professional fees, which will significantly reduce the funds in accounts earning interest.

f) In the budget, is it logical to assume that there will be no legacy income in 2023? Can we not allow for an average income over say the past 5 years, without 'counting our chickens'?

Response from Alan Frame:

Alan explained that the Finance team has never budgeted for legacy income. He had already illustrated the vast difference over a 20 year period, with £3,500 of legacy income in the 10 years preceding 2012, and the generous £680,000 received in the period 2012-2022. Alan also commented the uncertainties of probate and the time taken to realise the value of the legacy which was generally a percentage of the estate and which could take a considerable period to conclude. For these reasons, anticipating legacy income was not a practical option.

Alan concluded by saying the Finance team works hard to try to predict a budget for the following year. Work had started on this in October 2022. The challenges faced include: unpredictable expenses in maintaining an old building, increasing financial constraints and running costs. Alan shared how much he had enjoyed his role as Treasurer over the past 23 years, describing it as fun, commenting on how many familiar faces were still present and how pleased he is to see new faces joining the congregation. Alan ended by thanking the Church for the support he has received over the years.

The Congregation responded with resounding applause.

David Blacoe stood to propose a vote of thanks which was thoroughly endorsed by the congregation and subsequently Rosemary, who expressed heartfelt thanks for all Alan's dedication and hard work over the last 23 years.

7. **Annual Report on the Fabric of the Church** and other Properties, and on the Church Goods and Ornaments. Contained in Annual Report: Approved

8. PCC Elections

There were 2 vacancies on the PCC. One for a one year term on the retirement on Gerald Wisden and a 3 year term as Katherine Chambers completed 6 years as a lay representative. Tom Ellinor, proposed by David Williams, seconded by Elizabeth Martin was appointed to the one year term. The three year term remains vacant in addition to a vacant post from 2022.

Retiring members, Gerald Wisden serving for two years, Katherine Chambers serving for 6 years were warmly thanked for their valued contributions.

9. **Appointment of Deanery Synod Representatives.** There were three vacancies. Gill Glasspool, proposed by Avril Shipton, seconded by Carol Bingham, Shirleyann Dartnell, proposed by Sue Ellinor, seconded by Richard Martin and Leslie King, proposed by Jane Williams, seconded by Carol Bridger were appointed to 3-year terms. Retiring reps Merinda D'Aprano, serving for 6 years and Jen Sadler, retiring after 3 years, on grounds of ill health, were thanked for their valued contributions.

10. **Appointment of Independent Examiner.** Douglas Slade, retired Chartered Accountant was re-appointed to examine the accounts for year ending 31/12/2023 and was thanked for his work in examining the accounts for year ending 31/12/2022.

11. **Appointment of Parish Safeguarding Officers and DBS Validation Officers.** Leslie and Maureen King were appointed to these roles. Ro Stretton was thanked for her work over the previous six years. Rosemary thanked Fay Wedlake for covering this role from October 2022 until the formal appointment of Les and Maureen.

12. **Vicar's Report for APCM 16th April 2023:** delivered during the service

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19- end

If I were Thomas I would be very disappointed not to have been there when Jesus appeared. I often suffer from FOMO, '*Fear of Missing Out*'. The reality of life is that you can't do everything or be everywhere. There are not enough hours in the day, we do what we can, not what we can't. Consequently, I am sometimes disappointed. It comes from having high expectations. My spiritual director has told me many times that 7 is good enough and aiming for 9 or 10 is just unrealistic when actually 7 is pretty amazing. So, I really get where Thomas is coming from today. He is disappointed to have missed out but actually something even better is round the corner. Jesus appears again and he has an intimate conversation with Jesus that has provided a key teaching point for generations.

I was really encouraged to get a good number of questions for the APCM today. It shows that people are engaged and interested, however I suspect there was also a bit of FOMO – had you missed something? I can assure everyone that nothing is done behind closed doors. PCC summaries are attached to the newsletter for a couple of weeks post-meeting. The Summary and Minutes of each PCC meeting are displayed on the noticeboard as they have always been.

It is a reality of modern life; especially post Covid, that we can only take so much in. I sometimes feel like nothing ever happens and when I do a review with my spiritual director I'm often pleasantly surprised. For me 2022 felt weird, as I said in my introduction to the report. I was full of optimism and hope for change in January last year and then somehow it was December and I wondered where the 12 months had gone! I am aware that so many of us battled illness or grief this past year and that takes its toll leaving very little energy for anything else. The rollercoaster of emotions in celebrating Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee then mourning her death, just weeks later, also demonstrates what a tough time we have all been through. There have been times when, as a staff team, we have felt totally battered. With personal crisis as well as a wealth of administrative or building related challenges, making progress very disjointed. We have had to cling to the living hope that Peter describes. Ongoing staff changes and premises matters, coupled with financial constraints, will form the basis of this review of the year.

The obvious highlight was welcoming Esther and James and then also baby Gabriel. I felt I really journeyed Esther's pregnancy and am delighted that she has found fulfilment as a mother. We are blessed to have this new family in our midst. This has however caused a major pause in her training and curacy. We have had to develop patience, both she and I, as we greatly enjoy working together and anticipate massive potential here.

As you are aware, David and Jo left over a year later than originally intended, due to Covid and lack of movement in posts. Our long-term aims, to make improvements to 278 The Greenway, were further thwarted by a hiatus in the construction industry. Consequently, when Esther and James needed a place to live early, due to their landlord giving them short notice we were pleased to oblige. However, this meant the window for doing up the house disappeared. We hoped to capitalise on James' experience as a builder, but, with impending fatherhood and his work demands, he was

unable to commit, but has provided very helpful advice and support to the PCC, who wrestled long and hard about what to do.

With Esther's maternity leave, a new window of opportunity opened up, and with their consent and cooperation we were able to appoint an architect and draw up plans. In response to questions from Devorah let me give you more detail on this project.

The works include: creating a new family bathroom; a spacious kitchen /diner to address damp ingress; relocating the boiler which was on its last legs; converting the garage into a study, utility and cloakroom; improving security and 'kerb view' with a new front door and driveway. The funds, available for this, came from a generous legacy of £85,000 from Jessica Walls, which we ring-fenced for this purpose. When we got quotations from 4 separate builders it became apparent that the project was not achievable on this budget. Plans were scaled down and hard negotiations undertaken but nevertheless as time and prices move on, the full cost will probably be in the region of £135,000, excluding professional fees, which will need to come out of other project monies thus reducing that pot. We are 8 weeks in, and the house is progressing nicely. Esther and James have decamped to family, because the house is unliveable until completion, estimated mid/end May. After years of simple cosmetic maintenance this has been a major piece of work and significant investment which we hope will pay dividend in a lovely family home and asset for the parish either to house future Curates or as rentable revenue stream.

Other highlights have been: seeing how our discipleship has deepened through Alpha, the Prayer Course, exploring our holy habits and more recently Talking Jesus. We have seen many newcomers as well as celebrated with seven confirmation candidates. Our weekly worship and post service hospitality is thriving, and I feel we can give praise to God for a living hope because we are *'looking towards an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade'* (v4) and that is far more important than a pot of money in the bank for a rainy day. YET in not breaking news it's raining! It's literally been pouring as we've bailed out the boiler room, dealt with tree roots in the drains, crumbling guttering, and stonework. I feel I can empathise with the churches in Asia Minor, to whom St Peter wrote, *'you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.... to prove the genuineness of your faith'* (v6-7). There is greater worth than gold, and that is the salvation of souls. Hence our focus for this year being: growing faith and outreach.

I pray that we can all unite around our longstanding vision of being a Living Well and living well. We want our premises to be fit-for-purpose, a hub for the local community. We are fully aware that we have experienced major issues with church heating this winter, which Andy will address later. Neither do we want to be embarrassed about our office, kitchen or toilet facilities. We want them to be warm and accessible for everyone. To achieve this, we will need to spend the remaining legacy money along with applying for grants and digging deep ourselves in fundraising. It won't just happen, and we cannot rest on our laurels. The PCC is adamant that legacy money is not for day-to-day running costs. The living church should pay for living ministry, hence the making of tough decisions recently, which Alan will elaborate on. In our Gospel today, Jesus gives three instructions to his disciples, which, in turn, we can imagine him sharing with us. He instructs us to live in peace, to share that peace and be peacemakers in our world, offering forgiveness and hope to others. This is our mission as we seek to live well with God, others, and ourselves. He tells us to receive the Holy Spirit. We know we cannot achieve all we want in our own strength. That's when the FOMO, (fear of missing out) holds us back, we need to be liberated and trust in God's power that raised Jesus from

the dead. We need to testify to this power and have faith. Finally, Jesus tells Thomas and us to ‘*Stop doubting and believe*’. I know quite often that church folk can be naturally risk-averse and of course things need to be properly researched and reflected upon, but we’ve been on this hall redevelopment journey for a while now and we need to seize the day and have confidence that a new era is dawning and that there is life in Jesus.

As a church we will keep **knowing** God through prayer and worship. We will keep **growing** more like Jesus in our daily discipleship and keep **going** out in love and service to our local community. This is our calling. This is our Faith. This is our hope.

13. Questions from Congregation sent in advance not addressed in the Vicar’s or Finance Report.

From Hazel Rose

g) As a priority, do we need to spend money on a new heating system?

From Liz Pullinger

h) Would it be appropriate to consider a new heating system for the Church rather than putting money towards the new plan for the Hall?

Response from Chair of Premises Committee Andy Hards:

These are good questions and others have no doubt been thinking the same, given the problems with the heating this winter. Basically, the pilot light failed on numerous occasions. It has been replaced, the boiler has been firing up since and should keep going a while longer but it was difficult to obtain spare parts, so yes, we do need to investigate a replacement system. It would not however, be a good idea to rush ahead and spend a considerable sum of money immediately.

Andy attended a Deanery Eco Church meeting on 23 February; the lead speaker was Alison Moulden the Diocese Environment Officer. Alison mentioned that the Church Commissioners have allocated £190 million to help churches achieve “net zero.” How this will be distributed has yet to be decided but **Alison strongly suggested that individual churches look at their heating and have a plan and budget ready to apply for finance.** To qualify, a new system will almost certainly have to be non-fossil fuel burning.

Alison also suggested that churches will need to show that they have obtained independent advice on heating and an energy audit rather than free advice from an installer that could be misleading and inaccurate. She recommended registering with Parish Buying (done) to obtain discounted advice.

This will probably cost about £445 potentially less a £100 subsidy plus VAT. Grants may well be available within the Diocese towards the cost and Rosemary has a connection with the person in charge. Alison mentioned that the Church of England appreciates the difficulties and cost of heating large draughty churches and is aware that heat pump installations aren’t a suitable option in this situation. So in conclusion, yes we need to investigate a new system but need to do this in a planned, measured way taking further advice, considering very carefully the advantages and disadvantages of the options including factors such as power supply and be ready to apply for any financial aid available. Competition for aid will be intense so we will need to be prepared asap.

If you’d like to chat about the current heating system and its shortcomings which are largely a result of its age and design please have word with me.

(The next Deanery Eco Church meeting will concentrate on church heating, these are open meetings so all welcome. 24 May 7.30 pm at St Martins)

From Martin Shipton

- i) As part of the Living in Love and Faith initiative parishes were encouraged to respond with their views before 30 April 2022. Did Christ church PCC respond and if so what was their response?*

Response from Revd Rosemary Donovan:

LLF questionnaire was for individuals to respond to. I have no idea how people from CC responded. The turnout for the course was poor.

- j) Since the 2020 Vision Project and a hall extension project were launched there have been several architect proposals and discussions. What is the total spend on architect's fees to the present time*

Response from Revd Rosemary Donovan:

Approximately £14K .There is a fees scale within a project brief which is roughly 10% of completed project however as we are only at the design stage. Fees are all that have been spent.

From Jo Wolfe

- k) Question about Funds available for Hall Development:*

Response from Revd Rosemary Donovan:

You will recall we had about £450k ring-fenced in the living well fund for special projects from legacies. With works at the Greenway it will be a reduced amount for the hall redevelopment most likely £250- 300k. This will need supplementing with grants for accessibility and eco credentials as well as fundraising from the congregations.

The PCC has scaled down plans significantly in order to achieve a manageable project which Brendan will present following this service.

14. Closing comment by Revd Rosemary Donovan offering a further open meeting after the morning service on May 21 to answer any further questions which may arise and an invitation to refreshments and presentation in the Parish Hall to attend the presentation and discussion by Architect Brendan Tracey on the revised plans for the Parish Hall Development.

Jane Williams PCC secretary 23/04/2023