

REIGATE PARISH CHURCH

St Mary Magdalene with the Heath Church

Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2023

Monday 24th April 2023, 8.00pm to 9.30pm

St Mary's Church and livestreamed

YEAR IN REVIEW 2022

We hope you will join us for our APCM on Monday 24th April at 7.45pm for a prompt 8.00pm start.

This meeting will also be your opportunity to elect members of our Parochial Church Council (please note that you must be on the electoral roll to be able to stand or to vote) and also an opportunity for us to look back over the year, celebrate what God has been doing in this place, and prepare ourselves for what God has in store for us in the year ahead. It's an important meeting in our Church family life.

We would love you to take time to read the following reports in the week ahead.

We really hope you will join us for this very important event in our Church calendar.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Richard Wilson

REIGATE PARISH CHURCH WITH THE HEATH CHURCH
Annual Parochial Church Meeting AGENDA

Monday 24th April 2023 in the Church

VESTRY MEETING TO APPOINT CHURCHWARDENS

1. Welcome & Introduction
2. Election of Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Introduction to those standing for PCC
3. Election of 10 members to the PCC
4. Election of 7 members to the Deanery Synod
5. Minutes of last APCM (taken as read)
6. Matters Arising
7. Churchwardens' summary – Leslie Jackson / Tom Lumsden
8. Treasurer's Report & presentation of audited accounts for the year ending 31st December 2022 – Nick Pettitt
9. Vicar's Report – Richard Wilson | Nigel Griffiths
10. Matters arising from Annual Report | A Year in Review | Vicar's Report

YEAR IN REVIEW 2022

VICAR'S REPORT

Christ himself carried up our sins in his body to the tree, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds we have been healed.

1 Peter 2:23

As you all know, I am fond of reminding us all of the following three things:

Our vision is to see God changing lives, families, and churches again and again.

Our mission is to make whole life disciples of all ages, to create and support communities of people who worship God with their whole lives, and to model and reproduce this as widely as possible.

Our strategy is to draw people into intentional apprenticeship to Jesus through:

- reaching out to a world in need,
- drawing people into a new identity in Christ,
- developing a culture of discipleship,
- loving one another as family and
- giving ourselves away for the sake of others.



As our vision to see God change lives, and our mission to make disciples has continued to set our direction and drive our priorities over 2022, it is perhaps appropriate to say that last year was a year of steady awakening and renewal after the testing years of the pandemic.

As we look back, we can see that the 'covid-years' undoubtedly impacted us as a church, disrupting attendance, belonging, outreach and connection. While our 'reach' as a church remains quite wide, both the depth of our relationships and the strength of our engagement has become thinner than we would want it to be.

It is important to acknowledge that between 2020 and 2022, for a number of reasons – some known, and others hidden – the number gathering for worship each week has declined. Some people have left the church or drifted away, and this is a sadness to us all.

Last year I said that it was 'time for a worship reset' and I encouraged us 'not to give up the habit of meeting together.' I went on, 'Attending is infectious. The more we do it, the more

others do too. As far as we are able, we need to make Sunday special every week – a day to place worship at the centre of our lives. Just as satellites gravitate around the earth, so weekly worship is our way of making sure our lives are centred on King Jesus above all else.'

As attendance is still somewhat fragile and irregular, we have been praying for, and encouraging a renewed commitment to gathering for worship in the church, seeking a steady building of momentum and this formed part of our teaching series in the autumn.

With this in mind, it is encouraging to see that over the course of 2022 we have noticed a steady renewal and growth on Sundays with new people joining us, getting involved and bringing new energy.

We are all so grateful for everyone who serves each week to make worship and community possible, giving up time to help on all kinds of teams.

As a leadership we have also been calling ourselves to a renewal of churchwide prayer and over the course of the year a new pattern emerged of a monthly prayer meeting supported by the worship team. I am delighted to see that these have been growing in significance as we seek God together for the next chapter of our life together. Prayer, the foundation of our relationship with God, is the foundation of everything we are and all we do in his name. It is possible to our spiritual lives, our being with God, to be out of balance with our activity for God. Herein lies a great danger and, especially as we engage in mission beyond our borders, we need to make sure that our contemplation of God and life of prayer with him is able to sustain our activity for him.

As a church we have always wanted to respond to the needs and challenges of those in need. In 2022, following the invasion of Ukraine, we responded to the influx of refugees into the UK with energy, creativity, and intentionality. Working in partnership with the Local Authority and other charities and agencies, we quickly became a gathering point for hosts and refugee families, both from within the church and the wider community. A gifted small team co-ordinated this work and it has been so wonderful to see the way God has used us in blessing and helping others in such challenging times. The work continues as families look for longer term accommodation.

This has been such a formative experience for us all, and we have learned so much from it all. Seeking to reflect even more deeply about poverty alleviation and social action, a small group in the church, called St Mary's Local, was established. This group has been on a significant journey developing a set of principles to shape our future mission and in early 2023 they will share their learning and vision with the wider church for further shaping and discernment.

In response to the 'Living in Love and Faith' initiative of the wider Church of England, some further teaching was offered on Sundays, as we continued to explore together how to live faithfully in a post-Christian culture, especially around the issue of sexuality. This issue is being discussed at every level of Anglican church life, including at the General Synod which will be gathering to discern next steps in the coming year. These matters touch our lives in such powerful and important ways, and it will be important to open up opportunities for learning and sharing together as we move forward.

Perhaps some of the most significant changes in our church life in 2022, however, has been the shifts in the staff team with Ali Foulkes, Charles Merritt, and Erin Gilmour moving on, and Kate Capper changing role. Josh Brown was appointed Head of Worship Culture and Mandy Childs was appointed Children's Minister (6-11s). Although we were unsuccessful in appointing a Head of Family Discipleship, we remain committed to seeing parents supported as the key disciplers of their children and young people and anticipate investing in this in the coming years. This is especially the case as we anticipate the departure of Martin Saunders as he steps back from leadership of the Youth Ministry in 2023.

We are all so grateful for all that Ali, Charles and Erin brought us and we are delighted that Kate will continue to use her ministerial gifts in Spiritual Direction here. A new Head of Community Life role was agreed ready for an appointment in early 2023 and it is great that Ben Forbes will be joining the team, ready to start in July. We pray or God's people to fill our vacancies.

By the end of 2023, God willing, we will have an almost completely new staff team – a new Youth Minister, new Children's Ministers, two new Associate Ministers. It will take time for everyone to bed in and for new structures to become properly established. This will undoubtedly be the focus of my work over the coming year when I get back from my Sabbatical in July. New people will bring new giftings, ideas and personalities to the church leadership. Please pray for all this. It lies heavily on my heart as you can imagine.

The summer of 2022 was busy with the launch of the first Summer Satellites Festival, held in Peterborough under Martin Saunders' leadership. It was a joy to see so many from our church family support this and being on team, but the best thing about it was to witness the Spirit impact the lives of our young people and see them commit their lives to Christ.

Behind the scenes, from September, Nigel and I began more intentionally to explore the possibility of us church planting in the coming years and many discussions with the Diocese began to take place. Very quickly God opened doors and we have been invited to send a group of us, under Nigel's leadership, to graft into All Saints Church in Merstham in September 2023, as part of a larger strategic development plan of the Diocese as a way of pioneering mission on the Merstham estate. The calling on us to join in God's mission in new ways has become very clear and it will be so exciting to see where this leads as the year unfolds.

All church life requires financial resources, and I am so grateful to everyone who gives to the church each week. Under Nick Pettitt's leadership we have established new financial systems for accounting and monitoring our income and expenditure and as is mentioned later, we are so grateful for Mark Randall and Laura Juden-Wills for their hard work alongside him.

LOOKING AHEAD | NEW OPPORTUNITIES

I am writing this report the week before I head off on Sabbatical. I am so grateful for the gift of this time away to deepen my relationship with God, and to rest. The last few years has been demanding for me. All of us have had to cope with change, much of which has been very challenging, and the impact on us in church leadership has been significant.

As psychologist Peter Marris notes in his classic book, *Loss and Change*, people experience change as loss even if they accept the need or inevitability of it. Like loss, therefore, change requires time to repair. Change is a normal part of church life (just as it is in every other part of life), but church life normally ebbs and flows in longer rhythms of development as things evolve and adapt over time.

However, since 2020 we have experienced a period of what some call 'discontinuous change' – a period of change marked by the impact of significant forces outside our control that interrupt normal patterns of 'incremental change' in such a dramatic way and that they can cause a radical break with the past. This is the hardest kind of change to cope with as it brings with it a level of shock and grief. It is even more important, in these situations, to give time to recover from the emotional impact of it all.

So, even as we look ahead to support the exciting and vital mission of God in Merstham, it's time to rebuild the core of the church, to invest in relationships, and deepen our commitment to our church family, locality, and community. Please join me in praying for this.

KEEPING THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING

Ultimately though, our mission doesn't change. Even though the seasons come and go our task remains straightforwardly clear. Jesus commissioned us to make disciples – apprentices who seek to be with Jesus, become like him and to do the things he did.

In 2023 I am looking forward to:

- Welcoming and embedding new staff into our leadership
- Developing and implementing our plans for supporting and resourcing the churches of Merstham
- Running a successful in-person Alpha course in January
- Seeing Sunday attendance grow in commitment and regularity
- Strengthening our children's and youth work on Sundays and involving more of us in shaping our children's faith as a family
- Making the most of the opportunities of New Wine and Satellites Festivals
- Developing our approach to our local mission
- Increasing our financial investment in discipleship

GRATITUDE

I praise God for the signs of growth all around us. I praise God for the people I see coming to faith and growing deeper relationship with others. I praise God for the young people and children we see each week in our groups and on Sundays. I praise God for sustaining us through the tough Covid years. I praise God for new opportunities and new callings. I praise God for the sense of the Spirit moving among us.

A church is a family. It is a community of people dedicated to Christ and centred on him. It is a body. Once again, I want to thank all of you for your involvement and partnership in the gospel and in the life of this community. You are the life blood of this church. Thank you for your active service to Jesus.

A church is also a team, and I especially want to thank the team closest to me – my dear staff friends. It is the pleasure of my life working with you all. I thank God for you so much. You make so much happen. None of us is perfect but we are growing year by year.

I am so thankful for the warden team – for Tom, Leslie, Nick, and Becky, who have been such a support and source of wisdom through the year. Thank you for all you give!

And lastly, as always, I want to thank Tory. I am so looking forward to spending more time with you on Sabbatical. I can see how our shared calling impacts our lives as a couple and as a family and I am completely indebted for the thousands of ways that you make it possible for me to serve and lead. Spiritually, emotionally, and practically you give me so, so much. I love you. Thank you for it all.

Richard

Richard Wilson | Vicar

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

We write this report after an amazing year which has seen us have huge numbers at our celebration events throughout the year. One highlight was the truly inspirational 'Christmas Event'. We had hundreds of people join us for the 'Journey to Bethlehem' which took us through the Christmas story with donkey rides in the field imagining the journey with Mary and Joseph. We visited the shepherds, the angels, the wise men and finally met Jesus in the stable. All those who attended could not help but be touched by the majesty of the whole event and we will certainly be doing this again. Of course, such events could not happen without an army of volunteers, so a massive thank you goes out to everyone who helped and guided our visitors, all those who ran stalls and provided refreshments, and to those who publicised and arranged the events.

Another significant initiative this year has been Welcome Ukraine. We would like to pay tribute to all who have been involved in this and in a myriad of other ways, throughout the year, in so many aspects of our church life here at St Mary's and at the Heath Church. A big thank you to you all.

When we work together in sharing our faith, hope, and love in our Lord Jesus we grow in community and agape love for our God and in fellowship with one another. The more we worship, pray, study and work together the more we grow in 'Koinonia'. The early Christians "continuously devoted themselves to fellowship." (Acts 2:42). The word for "fellowship" is koinonia, which means "to have in common" or "to share". As those who are united with Christ, we can share the life of Christ with one another in a way that results in individual and corporate spiritual growth. The continuing success of our Life Groups is evidence of this type of fellowship, and we want to give our grateful thanks to all the Life Group leaders, for all you do to shepherd the flock.

As a community we believe that nothing is impossible with God who hears our prayers. In Philippians (4: 6&7) it says "by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus". Our graft into Merstham is an example of 'giving ourselves away for the sake of others'. This is an exciting time for us all, as we pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit as we all take this step of faith. The monthly Prayer Evenings have been a powerful time of intercession and will continue throughout the year, so if you haven't been we thoroughly recommend that you join us when you can. Talking of prayer, the 24/7 prayer space before Easter was once again awesome, spending time with our loving Father and resting in His care is always a moving experience.

Please continue to hold St. Mary's in your prayers as we are facing changes in our staff team over the next months. We are so grateful to Nigel leading us at this time, and to Kate Capper, coming back to help during Richard's sabbatical. Kate moved on as Associate Vicar in December, and as we did then we want to acknowledge with gratitude Kate's service to us and the way she continues to bless us all. We would appreciate your prayers for the appointment of a new Youth Minister. We are blessed with one of the largest children's and youth ministries in the UK, so this is hugely important to the furtherance of Christ's Kingdom. Please do continue to pray for those who are considering applying for this important role. It would be fantastic to be able to interview again with a view to someone starting in the role in September. With Nigel and Gen moving on in August we will also be looking for their replacements.

Continuing on the theme of youth and children, we are really grateful for those who help Gen, Mandy and Martin to lead our groups; these groups simply couldn't happen without you, so thank you very much. There is always room for more helpers, not least those who can give one to one help to those with additional needs. In the summer of 2022 Martin Saunders and the 'Youthscape' team ran an amazing 'Satellites' event for young people, a five-day gathering, designed to inspire teenagers to live with God at the centre of their lives for the other 360 days of the year. Last summer we took a team of adult volunteers and an

amazing number of young people, many of whom made a fresh commitment to Jesus in their lives, Hallelujah. If you would like to join a group of us going this August, please contact Martin or look at the Youthscape website.

In closing, grateful thanks must go to our ministry team, our worship leaders, the youth and children's ministers, the admin and site team and of course to our army of volunteers, without whom we could not offer so many activities. Everyone has given so generously and sacrificially of their time and energy this year and we are truly thankful. I would like to thank Rachel Howe, who is moving on after many years leading our Girls' Brigade. She has been an inspiration as this group has gone from strength to strength. And I would like to thank Jenny Rayner who stepped down from leading St Mary's Global after several years, for all she has done and the way she has kept global mission at the forefront of our prayer and activity. I also want to thank all our PCC members. Special thanks are due to Liz Gunn, Pete Chesterton and Peter Darwent who have all served for a significant length of time not only on the PCC but as our representatives on the Deanery Synod. Thank you for your faithful service.

It would be wrong not to mention the tremendous impact that our friend John Nicholson who was our Pathfinder leader for many, many years in the 70s and 80s, and his impact on so many of our lives. He is now with the Lord, but we remember him with fondness for his love, kindness, enthusiasm and his heart for Jesus; as well as his awful jokes and quirky sense of humour! His memory lives on with all of us who were privileged to call him our friend.

We pray that we may all, as God's family, here in Reigate, keep our hearts and minds open to God's plan for us all. There will, undoubtedly, be more challenges to face but let us walk and listen to Jesus as He guides us on our way.

Leslie Jackson and Tom Lumsden | Churchwardens

FINANCE REPORT

Having been elected Treasurer at the last APCM, I have gradually taken over the helm from Alastair Rubie during the past year. I'd like to start my report by thanking him for his patience and ongoing support.

Recently (very) the team and I have completed the first Audit with me at the helm. This was a steep learning curve, but I was ably supported by Mark Randall, Laura Juden-Wills, Su Rogers and Deirdre Hucklebridge. I couldn't do this role without all of you.

The year has brought many challenges, and successes, with most notably our first budgeting process completed and a move of finance system to the Xero accounting software. Grateful thanks for the implementation of Xero go to Laura for the many extra hours spent getting all transactions for 2022 onto the system, despite the project only starting in September, and Mark for his gold partner expertise on Xero.

The PCC received management accounts, the annual budget and updated forecasts to ensure their governance obligations as Trustees of the Charity were maintained, and any challenges and extra expenditure requirements highlighted.

I now turn to the 'Financial Review of the year' (pages 6-7 of the Statutory Accounts) which is summarised below.

The annual accounts for 2022 have been audited and are presented at the APCM. A copy is posted on the Church website under 'Giving' and 'Annual Accounts 2022'.

- Our Finances for 2022 were back to pre-pandemic levels with both income and expenditure exceeding 2021 levels. In particular, one-off donations far exceeded budget and, despite monthly giving decreasing at the end of the financial year (I'm told this is a normal trend), general giving was also slightly ahead of budget over the year.
- Income exceeded expenditure with a surplus of £68,672 which, less Capital expenditure of £6,699, was added to the General Fund reserve. This surplus equates to 8.9% of the income for 2022 and was largely because of the one-off donations and the staff appointments not being made as expected. The General Fund reserve was therefore at a very healthy level of £262,544 at the end of 2022 and will provide a firm foundation for our intended activities in 2023.

We have a great deal to thank God for, including our finances.

- Also, bookings of both the Church and Centre exceeded pre-pandemic levels and it was encouraging to see both being used so much. However, there is still some unused capacity so please contact the Operations team for any booking enquiries.
- Our largest expense continues to be the Diocesan Share (roughly equates to our clergy and one other) to which we contributed £246K or 34% (2021 39%) of our total expenditure.
- Total staff costs took up £174K, £7K more than in 2021. This was because some positions mentioned in the Vicar's report were not replaced as expected.
- Payments to mission partners, missional organisations and other donations amounted to £84K (2021, 70K) evidence of our focus on mission.
- The Investment Funds, largely the Peggy Caffyn-Tees legacy, continue to be invested with CCLA. Their market value on 31st December show a loss of £55,287. This was broadly in line with the downturn in the financial markets in 2022.

For 2023, we are budgeting for a small but manageable deficit with costs likely to increase as new appointments are made.

I would like to finish with a huge thank you to everyone who has given, and continue to give, so generously in 2022 both financially and of their time.

Nick Pettitt | Treasurer

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

This year there are 573 names on the Electoral Roll, with 41 new names added and 14 names removed; 36% of people on the roll live within the parish and 64% outside it. If you are considering standing for election onto next year's PCC, please make sure your name is on the electoral roll by the end of September 2023.

Catherine Farrow | Electoral Roll Officer

PCC REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2022/3

The PCC met six times from May 2022 to March 2023.

There are several subgroups which have continued to meet as appropriate. These are:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Finance | • Deanery/Diocesan synod |
| • Heath Church | • Standing Committee |
| • Fabric and facilities | • Eco Church |
| • St Mary's Global | • Safeguarding |
| • St Mary's Local | • Centre Management |

As well as regular finance and PCC subgroup updates, there has been discussion on Family Discipleship; Children's Minister and Head of Community Life recruitment; Youth work vacancy; Worship Culture; plans for a church plant to Merstham; St Mary's Local; Richard's sabbatical.

The approved minutes of PCC meetings are available for all to read in the folders in the chancel in the church, at the back of the Heath Church, and are available on request to the office.

PCC Members 2022/2023:

Clergy	Richard Wilson Kate Capper Nigel Griffiths Erin Gilmour (to September 2022) Helen Fraser
Churchwardens	Leslie Jackson Tom Lumsden
Deanery Synod	Peter Chesterton Peter Darwent Gareth Evans Liz Gunn Mark Johnson Brenda Juntunen Philippa Parry
Diocesan Synod	Leslie Jackson Nigel Griffiths
Elected	Tom Andrew Becky Beggs Ali Brown Martin Hetherington Tania Hillsdon Esther Lyth Andrew Morgan Cogo Moore Nick Rayner Margaret Wood
Treasurer	Nick Pettitt

Sally Bertlin | PCC Secretary

HEATH CHURCH REPORT

The Heath Church have enjoyed a very encouraging past 12 months having re-established a healthy rhythm following lockdown. Thanks to the Peggy Caffyn-Tees legacy they have completed the refurbishment of the interior and exterior of the main church building and put the finishing touches to the Annexe to make it a multi-purpose space for hospitality, socials and business meetings. It may not be long before it will also be used as a spill-over for Sunday Morning Services as numbers continue to go up, now approaching 50. It has been encouraging to see many new faces week by week. If you are planning to make a visit, get there early as there are dwindling numbers of spare seats! The church continues to enjoy high quality worship from a wide range of leaders, preachers, and musicians from both the Heath and St Mary's for which they are very grateful.

Nigel Griffiths

DEANERY SYNOD REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2022/3

What is a deanery? Deaneries are geographical groups of parishes whose congregations work in partnership with each other to celebrate the Good News of Jesus Christ and share the Gospel with all people. You can see more at: <https://southwark.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Deanery-Synod-Model-Rules-2020-Final-Approved.pdf>.

In our most recent meeting in March 2023, Bishop Rosemarie Mallett had asked us to discuss the Southwark Diocesan Vision. We had some lively discussion and will be presenting the results in our next meeting.

The Southwark Mission:

- walking with Jesus and getting to know Him better as we journey on
- welcoming all, embracing our diversity and seeking new ways of being Church
- growing in numbers, generosity, faith and discipleship as we grow God's Kingdom.

In October 2022 Harriet Pearce and I did a SparkFish Presentation; see <https://sparkfish.org.uk>.

SparkFish is a local, collaborative, Christian organisation that aims to inspire and encourage young people in faith, hope and love. They engage with young people in schools across Reigate, Redhill and Merstham, offering support in important areas of the curriculum and school life. This is delivered through three strands:

- Learn: Religious Education events for schools which bring the Bible to life, and assemblies. These events include The Christmas Journey (for Y2 children) and The Easter Experience (for Y5 children).
- Hope: Support for students at times of change and challenge through mentoring, courses and workshops.
- Think: Space and time in a busy school for reflection and wonder, hopes and prayers.

If you are able to and would like to contribute towards the work of SparkFish, please go to: <https://sparkfish.org.uk>.

We also had updates from:

Welcare which is a charity working with families and children up to the age of 13 in South London and East Surrey: <https://welcare.org>.

Reigate Archdeaconry Social Justice Focus: <https://reigatedeanery.org.uk/rasjf>.

ECO Church: The Diocese is keen to move the Deanery up to Silver Status. We need more churches to sign up and be champions for Eco Church.

The June 2022 meeting was wholly given over to Reigate Archdeaconry Social Justice Focus (RASJF)

Their presentation can be seen on our deanery website:
<https://www.reigatedeanery.org.uk/rasjf/>.

Leslie Jackson | Lay Chair Reigate Deanery

DIOCESAN SYNOD REPORT 2022

Your elected members are Nigel Griffiths (clergy) and Leslie Jackson (laity [as well as Deanery Lay Chair]).

There have been three meetings since the last APCM. Our agendas have included:

- A review of the role of Deaneries and rules and constitution of Deanery Synods
- A presentation on Welcare
- The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education: The drafting of a new Scheme (governance, practice, representation in diocese)
- Development of a carbon net zero action plan
- Debate on Ethical Investment strategy (to be voted on at next Synod)
- The Global Anglican Communion
- Reports from the General Synod

The new national Synod for the next 5 years has convened twice.

- Most notably, making national news, was the discussion and proposal of amendments to the Prayers in Love and Faith (PLF) advanced by the House of Bishops which came on the back of the Living in Love and Faith process of 2021-22.
- At the latest Diocesan Synod in March it was deemed too early to open up to discussion of PLF at the Diocesan Synod given that the prayers, pastoral guidelines and a fuller explanation have yet to be finalised (scheduled for the July or possibly even November Synods later this year).
- However, an informative review of the governance of the Global Anglican Communion was given at the March 2023 Synod which shed light on representation, policy making and electoral processes in the global Anglican church of which the C of E is a part.
- During his Presidential Address at the same meeting Bishop Christopher urged members to support 'an open process of reception' which he defined as 'a way of testing whether a controversial development arising within a province by legitimate processes, might gradually, over time, come to be accepted as an authentic development of the faith', citing examples of changes in the Church's stance on contested issues such as the ordination

of women priests and bishops. Along with other statements in the public domain, this has been seen in some quarters as signalling a trajectory away from the traditional teaching of the church on sex and marriage. Following from this Bishop Christopher will shortly be meeting with leaders of Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic churches including many of the larger churches in the diocese to address questions and concerns arising from what could be a significant change in Church of England law and doctrine.

BUDGET | The general mood is one of Thanksgiving for healthy finances. Having budgeted for a 2022 deficit of £1.1m the forecast towards the end of the year was for a reduced deficit of £0.4m.

As the Diocesan Secretary summarised: The improved forecast for the current year is in large part due to the generosity of our parishes and the resilience of the Parish Support Fund (PSF) model.... Our parishes have been magnificent in honouring their 2022 pledges; being creative and encouraging giving despite the economic uncertainties and the challenges of returning from Covid restrictions.

A balanced/ break-even budget is planned for 2023.

TWO NEW BISHOPS | Within the past year two new episcopal area bishops have been appointed:

- +Rosemarie Mallet (formerly Archdeacon of Croydon) as the new Bishop of Croydon replacing +Jonathan who has retired. (It was a joy to welcome her to the St Mary's 10.30 am service last month where she preached and led communion.)
- +Martin Gainsborough (formerly Chaplain to the Bishop of Bristol) as the new Bishop of Kingston

Nigel Griffiths