



REIGATE PARISH CHURCH WITH THE HEATH CHURCH

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

held on Monday 28th April 2025 in the church

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS TO APPOINT CHURCHWARDENS

1. Welcome & Introduction:

Richard Wilson welcomed everyone. He read from 1 Corinthians 12 v 4 – 11 of the gifts of the Spirit and culminating in verse 13 'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love' from 1 Corinthians 13. He then committed the meeting to God in prayer.

2. Election of Churchwardens.

There were two nominations for churchwarden:

Leslie Jackson, proposed by Philippa Parry and seconded by Gareth Evans

Nick Rayner, proposed by Debbie Jackson and seconded by Esther Lyth

In the absence of any other nominations, they were duly elected and welcomed to their post.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. Attendees and Apologies for Absence:

There were 63 attendees at the meeting. The meeting was also streamed so a number watched online during and after the meeting.

Apologies: Sheila Dobson, Fliss Drewett, David Gilmore, Elizabeth Gurteen, Freda Handley, Roger Harse, Sarah Harse, Paul Hildreth, Vicky Hildreth, Owen Johns, Janet Malcolm, Julia Pettitt, Nick Pettitt, Sharon Tunnah, Marnie Simmons, Jane Straker, Gail Terry, Gill Utting, Andy West

2. Election of PCC:

Richard Wilson introduced those standing for the PCC, saying that their responsibilities included the overall wellbeing of the church and its finances. The profiles of those who had been nominated for the 10 places were displayed at the back of church.

In the absence of any other nominations the following were duly elected:

Becky Beggs
Tim Collins
Lorraine Martin

James Bunch
Zach Downie
James Norman

Ian Capper
Debbie Jackson

Heather Chesterton
Esther Lyth

There was a time of prayer, for all those elected to the PCC.

3. Minutes of the April 2024 APCM

The Minutes of the last APCM (held on 29th April 2024) had been made available on the website, in advance of the meeting and were approved.

Proposed by Vron Booth and seconded by Heather Chesterton and all were in favour.

4. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising

5. Vicar's Report

Richard Wilson's report had been circulated in the 'Year in Review' prior to the meeting. Speaking to his report, Richard reiterated our vision to see God change lives, making disciples through:

- **Reaching out** to a world in need
- **Forming** people into a new identity in Christ
- **Developing** a culture of discipleship
- **Loving** each other as family
- **Giving** ourselves away for the sake of others

And it is against these five themes that we need to evaluate and review our ministry and community life together – honestly taking stock of where God is at work and we are seeing blessing, and where we feel we are struggling or not thriving.

As we look back Richard said we need to consider whether we have been faithful in what God has asked of us and have we seen the fruit that comes from abiding in Christ, loving one another, and bearing witness to his coming kingdom? It is those signs of growth that we celebrate, whether new people joining, baptisms, as well as the quieter, deeper work of God in our lives: people finding healing, reconciliation, a deeper hunger for Scripture, or a renewed commitment to prayer and service.

The past year has been one of **stability, strength, and resilience**. In a world full of uncertainty, these qualities have grown in our church family

In the past year we've used the same teaching themes and readings across our congregations, exploring together:

- The transforming power and relevance of the gospel
- Jesus' radical call in the Sermon on the Mount, as we live in anticipation of His kingdom
- The exodus journey – from slavery to freedom – and what it means for us today
- And what it means to walk with Jesus in the everyday reality of life – through its joys, its griefs, and everything in between

Our ministry to the next generation has flourished, under the leadership of Emily Irving and Mandy Childs and our All-Together services have developed throughout the year. Although we didn't

appoint a 0–5s Children’s Minister in 2024, our volunteer teams stepped up to lead the different groups.

As a church we were delighted to appoint Simon Russell as Associate Vicar for Discipleship and Leadership. While we welcomed him to the staff team, we said farewell to Vineeta Childs who had been part of the administration team for several years. She had been replaced by Hannah Burton. Richard expressed gratitude to Jane Melbourne, who had been one of our safeguarding officers. She has handed over the role to Lorraine Martin and Vicky Hildreth, who will work with Leslie Jackson. Gratitude was also expressed to Tim Hyde, and his care in overseeing our buildings and facilities.

Planning for our Church Weekend Away is underway and will be a chance for our whole church family to reconnect, recharge, and rejoice together.

FUTURE PLANS

In the year ahead Richard said that we need to secure our finances. He highlighted the ‘Living Generously’ giving campaign.

In line with our strategic priorities, we want to:

1. Reach out to a world in need:

- Prepare for, and launch, a ‘Begin Well’ group
- Build on and develop our outreach to families seeking to appoint a Younger Children and Families Lead.
- Work with other local churches to address needs around debt and finance
- Further embed our approach to social engagement and local mission around the issues of isolation, special needs, and families
- Teaching and training in evangelism
- Further develop our series of invitational social events enabling deeper connection and relationship.
- Better connecting church members with opportunities to serve and engage in projects both within the church and in the wider community

2. Draw people into a new identity in Christ:

- Run Alpha courses for adults and young people and induct people well who come forward for baptism and recommitment
- Teach on identity and belonging to the church and supporting this further through our weekend away.

3. Develop a culture of discipleship:

- Continue to highlight the importance of prayer in every area of church life
- Further develop our small groups seeing the level of attendance grow and the number of groups expand.
- Invest in leaders, developing our leadership pipeline and providing training opportunities
- Launch a ‘Summer School’ of theology
- Hold a Weekend Away for all ages
- Develop our links with New Wine, hosting ‘New Wine Network days’.

Love one another as family:

- Develop our pastoral care structures; adopting an Anna Chaplaincy approach

Give ourselves away for the sake of others:

- Strengthen our partnership with Merstham
- Continue to develop our relationships with other churches and networks as we seek to grow resilient disciples in our secular age.

Gratitude and thanks

Richard gave thanks for all in the church family, noting particularly the churchwarden team, Leslie Jackson, Nick Rayner and Esther Lyth, thanking them for their support. He also expressed gratitude to Mark Randall for all his work as our treasurer. He thanked the staff team and all those who serve as volunteers in whatever capacity in our church. He read out the list of all the categories of people serving in different teams and ministries, giving thanks for all of them.

Richard said that underneath it all we have the steady hands of God holding us — the one who is our rock, our refuge, our strong foundation and drew us to Psalm 125 which reminds us:

“Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be shaken but endures forever.
As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forevermore.”

In thanking not only members of St Mary's, Richard also thanked his wife, Tory, for her support.

6. Youth Work

Emily Irving gave a verbal report of the past 18 months, as she had led the different areas of youth work in our church and connected with others in our locality. She spoke of the excellent foundations she has been able to build on, and with the current team too. All the youth work in St Mary's is done under the banner of Satellites whether on a Sunday morning or on Wednesday evenings. Toast has been one of the initiatives and has been such a blessing as young people come together after the evening service. She spoke of Unite worship evenings led by the young people, Youth Alpha, Prayer 24/7 and the baptisms of some of the young people. She spoke of the opportunities to connect with Sparkfish, doing assemblies for Reigate Grammar School, as well as the residentialials whether the Satellites festival, Carrotty Wood or the Toast weekend.

Emily then told some stories to illustrate what is going on within the youth ministry and our young people's lives. She also spoke with gratitude of all who lead in Satellites, mentioning too those who had assisted with Youth Alpha and of the enthusiasm of the young people.

Emily gave thanks to the staff and volunteer team, for St Mary's being a church that supports youth ministry, and for those who support and pray for our young people. She said there is fruit and referred to 'The Quiet Revival Report' (Bible Society) which speaks of growth in the church, led by young people.

Emily referred to plans for the future, including a 'Satellites graduation' for those currently in Year 13. She wants Satellites to be a place where God is at the centre, because it is the best way to live, that young people will come with their friends, and come and make friends. She encouraged our own involvement with young people, as we pray for them and chat with them. And she encouraged people to be involved.

Richard led everybody in prayer, in twos and threes, for our young people.

7. Treasurer's Report and audited accounts for the year ending 31/12/24

Mark Randall spoke to his report which had been circulated in the 'Year in Review' document. In his introduction he gave thanks for the generosity of the church family. It is this generosity which has enabled the mission and ministry of the church, along with our prayers, service and time given by so many and which has enabled the church to raise £735,000. The APCM is the final stage for the approval of the accounts, following the audit process and approval by the PCC.

In 2024 our income exceeded our expenditure, so we ended up with a deficit of £55,000. This was a planned deficit and was a slight improvement on the general fund budget that was set at the beginning of the year. Our general reserves sit at £253k with funds set aside for maintenance and £72K for the Church Centre.

Mark said that our total income for the year was £735k compared to £802k in 2023. The decline is largely explained by our legacies income which was £84k in 2023 and £10k in 2024. Planned giving and donations were down 3% from 2023 levels, a likely reflection of the wider economic headwinds and cost of living pressures. Gift aid was up 6% as we were able to recover from those who were encouraged to complete a gift aid form. Our rental income from bookings from the Church and Centre were up by c £6k. Mark also said that although planned giving was down earlier in the year the impact of the giving campaign was an upturn in March. He stressed how important our planned giving is.

Mark then referred to our expenditure. Payments to mission partners, missional organisations and other donations amounted to £71K. Our largest expense continues to be the Diocesan Share to which we contributed £262K or 34% of our total expenditure. Total staff costs took up £213K, £26K more than in 2023, largely a reflection of more resources being put into the children's ministry and community life.

The Investment Funds, such as the Peggy Caffyn-Tees legacy, continue to be invested with CCLA. Their market value on 31st December showed £368k, up from £358k in 2023. We also hold reserves for fabric work on the church and Centre of £72K. Mark referred to our reserves which he said were overall in a healthy position; at the end of the year our general reserve was £253,244.

He said that for 2025, the PCC has agreed to budget for a deficit of £58k, which reflects a cautious approach to our planned giving income, coupled with cost increases due to additional staff resources. However, he feels that we should be able to make inroads into the deficit budget.

He finished with a huge thank you to everyone who has given, and continues to give, so generously.

Questions to the Finance Report

Richard asked whether there were any questions.

Michael Heneker noted that we had planned for a deficit budget over the last three years and he and others were concerned that this was unsustainable, so how would we get back to a more balanced budget in 2026. What is the plan to take us to a balanced budget or even a surplus?

Mark Randall responded by saying that last year was the first year we had had an actual deficit budget, as in the previous three years we had budgeted for a deficit budget but had not ended up with one. At the PCC we have discussed much about what is a comfortable level of reserves which we should run with. He said that in 2026 we will need to live within our means and not have a deficit budget, so we need to work towards that. However, he feels that we're in a stronger position this year than we had been last year. In terms of our position on reserves we need to balance out the maintaining of reserves, while at the same time not sitting on money that people have given to the ministry of the church.

Alastair Rubie asked about how we can reduce our deficit, noting the increased staffing costs. Mark said it was something the PCC have been grappling with, ensuring that our budget was adjusted to cut our expenditure.

Fenella Whinney said that although pleased to have Simon Russell join the team, she wondered why he couldn't within his position of overseeing the youth and children's work, also absorb the 0-5s ministry that we're advertising for.

Richard responded saying that we had not employed Simon as a children's worker but rather that he had been appointed for the vital work of overseeing discipleship and growing the leadership pipeline, along with line managing our youth and children's team ministers and having overall responsibility for our ministry with families. As we grow and develop our discipleship, our finances will follow that. We've increased our investment in young people through employing a full-time youth minister and have seen the fruit from that. Likewise, we need to invest in our 0-5s work, which is a key demographic in our church, as we seek to employ a part-time children's minister for that age group. The parents of our little ones are a key for the future, as we invest in them, as they will be with us for the journey.

Richard thanked Mark for all that he had given over the past years and all the support he had given to the PCC, to the previous treasurers Alastair Rubie and Nick Pettitt and for stepping up to be our treasurer over the past year. Mark was presented with bottles of wine, in gratitude for all that he has contributed and in keeping our finances on track.

Resolutions

1. It was proposed that we should adopt the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31/12/2024.

This was proposed by Ian Capper and seconded by Alastair Rubie and agreed unanimously.

2. It was proposed that the APCM should delegate authority to the PCC to appoint the auditors, in advance of the next audit. Our current auditors have been taken over by another company.

This was proposed by Vron Booth and seconded by Mark Randall and agreed unanimously.

With Mark standing down the PCC will be appointing a new treasurer at the next PCC meeting. Pete Wilson has agreed to take this on. Richard introduced Pete to the APCM and warmly welcomed him.

1. Churchwardens' Report

Leslie Jackson and Nick Rayner spoke to their report which had been circulated within the 'Year in Review' document.

Nick said there had been much to give thanks for. In contrast to the previous year, 2024 had been characterised by consistency, stability and consolidation. It had been so good to welcome Simon Russell as Associate Vicar for Discipleship and Leadership, together with Hanna and their children. Simon joined in July as Associate Vicar - Discipleship and Leadership.

Leslie went on to thank all in the church family who had reached out in love and service in countless ways both at St Mary's and at the Heath Church. He also drew attention to the work of the PCC and their commitment to the governance of St Mary's and The Heath, and their support of Richard in church leadership. During the year the PCC had had important discussions and decisions to make, whether around our finances, the appointment of staff, 'Prayers of Love and Faith' or the church weekend away, the latter which we are particularly excited about. Leslie gave thanks to all who give to the life and ministry of the church. He said that we are mindful that we are managing a deficit budget, and he raised the need for all of us to consider prayerfully our giving as well as the possibility of leaving a legacy to St Mary's in our wills. Leslie also thanked Mark Randall for his work as our treasurer and Nick Pettitt who had been treasurer in the previous two years.

Of the many ministries, Nick Rayner highlighted our worshipping life together, which takes many forms across the services and events throughout each week and across the year. He thanked the many teams who contribute and in particular Josh Brown for heading up our Worship Culture. The ministry among youth and children was another area of ministry which has flourished, as well as many other activities at the Heath and St Mary's which range across all the generations.

In closing Leslie and Nick gave thanks for our clergy and ministry team, for Mike Fox, Kate Capper, Helen Fraser, Danielle Robinson as well as for Richard Wilson, Simon Russell and Ben Forbes. Gratitude was expressed for their willingness to bring their gifts and passion to their leadership in our church and our community.

Richard gave thanks for Nick and Leslie and all they contribute, and they each prayed for the church.

Nick Rayner concluded the meeting by giving thanks for Richard and all he gives to us, as vicar of our church.

The meeting ended at 10.05 pm