

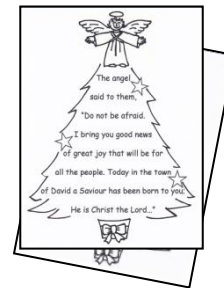
THE DIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK REIGATE DEANERY

St Philip's Church, Reigate

“Faith, Family, Friends, Future ...and Fun!”



GIVE A TENT FOR LENT



Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year beginning 1st January 2022 and ending 31st December 2022

Vicar: Revd Jennifer Penn, The Parsonage, 102A Nutley Lane, Reigate, Surrey RH2 9HA

www.stphilipsreigate.com

St Philip's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, Revd Jennifer Penn, in the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of St Philip's Church Hall, Nutley Lane, Reigate.

The Electoral Roll at the APCM in 2021 was 116.

St Philip's PCC:

All regular members of the congregation are encouraged to be members of the Electoral Roll, from which up to nine PCC members are elected annually. The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of concern and importance to the parish including deciding how the PCC funds are to be spent.

PCC members 2022:

Ex Officio members:

- Incumbent: Revd Jennifer Penn (Chair)
- Warden: Mr David Collett (Deputy Chair – until 13th March 2022)
- Warden: Mrs Michelle Pegley
- Warden: Mrs Annie Hilder (from 13th March 2022)
- Assistant Curate (Permission To Officiate): Revd Eileen Stanghan

Elected members:

- Mr Tim Blatt (Treasurer)
- Mr Charles Blatt
- Mr David Collett (from 13th March 2022)
- Mrs Annie Hilder (until 13th March 2022 – elected warden)
- Mrs Lisa Ingham (until 13th March 2022)
- Mrs Helen Jerome (from 13th March 2022)
- Mr Dominic Kiley (until 13th March 2022)
- Ms Anne Millington (from 13th March 2022)
- Mrs Christine Perera (from 13th March 2022)
- Mrs Susan Sargent
- Mrs Susan Stallard (from 13th March 2022)
- Mrs Paula Rowbotham (until 13th March 2022)

PCC Secretary: Ms Claire Hoskins (until 13th March 2022) Mrs Kay Wheatley (from 14th June 2022)

Hall Managers: Mr Russell Pearson (Operations) and Mrs Christine Perera (Lettings)

Hall Managers: Mrs Christine Perera and Mr Russell Pearson (From 1st November 2021)

Electoral Roll Officer: Mrs Michelle Pegley

PCC Treasurer: Mr Tim Blatt

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Chairman's Welcome and review of 2022: Jenny Penn

Thank you all for coming, and thank you to all who have contributed to our Annual Report for 2022, which is a great encouragement as we emerge from all the restrictions of the past three years. As we look back on 2022 we can see how far we have come with God's help, and all that we have learned on the journey together.

Many thanks to all those who are standing as Welcomers and Sidespersons and PCC members, for Helen our auditor, and for Annie and Michelle whom we have just elected as wardens once more; again, such an encouragement.

Our PCC have recently reflected on our church values and expanded them from "Faith, Family and Fun" to include "Friendship", reflecting our fellowship which has deepened over recent years, and "Future", as we feel God is leading us on an "Eco-Church" journey as part of our future together. Through our values we have developed our successive "Mission Action Plans" in the past, and will work out a way forward, with God's help, in the coming year. But first, let's remember the highlights of 2022...

In January we enjoyed a visit by Dave Farris from the Children's society telling us about the work we support mainly through our Christingle services and collection boxes. Thanks to Pauline Grant who stepped down as our Society rep for St Philip's and to Liz Espin who has carried this role on. January also saw the departure of Laura Lacey, our Sunday School team leader for many years, who moved to Brighton. We give thanks for all her hard work in nurturing and discipling children and leaders over the years, and are so grateful to Niki Hurst-Smith, Lindsay Hill, and Bev Herneman who are now co-ordinating the team.

In February we had a lot of fun sampling "Fairtrade" goodies after a Sunday service to mark "Fairtrade Fortnight", and partly in response to the tragedy in Ukraine we included the "Tent for Lent" as part of our Lent Appeal, as well as St Matthew's Food Bank. Thanks to Lynne Macleod for organising this, and to everyone who donated; in the end I think we were able to fund three tents in all! We were so encouraged by this, that we are doing it again this year!

Easter gave us lots of opportunity for reflection through our groups and services, amazing flowers, and some beautiful singing from the Music Group. Thanks to Annie Hilder and Austin Penn who co-ordinate the music group which is so much enjoyed by so many, and to Sarah Reader and her team who have brought the beauty of creation into church over and over again in such imaginative ways this year.

In May we had the opportunity to learn from Harriet Pierce, Chair of SparkFish, about the work that they do in local schools, and how we might get involved, and then it was the Platinum Jubilee, where we blessed our local neighbourhoods by joining in with the celebrations where we lived. Thankfully our prayers were answered and it didn't rain until the evening! The Diocese paid us a visit and asked us to increase our contribution, quite a challenge for a small church, but I am pleased to see that this year our giving has increased following our appeals, and more people have joined in with regular giving. Your contributions are much appreciated, and please do consider signing up if you haven't already to the work of the church in this community.

August saw us travelling far and wide and sharing our experiences of finding God in unexpected places; the coffee morning even went "on safari" to the Parsonage garden and to our friends at the Abbeyfield Community. Wasn't it great to see First Steps starting again in September? Thanks to all the team who stepped up to make it possible... we had no idea if anyone was coming that first session, and then suddenly... they came! September also saw a gathering of friends and family in dedication of a bench on Reigate Heath in memory of our dear friend Harry Hilton, who died in his 101st year during the pandemic. Thanks to Sarah Reader who created a lovely flower arrangement to place on the bench, and to John Millard for hosting everyone afterwards for coffee at the Golf Club.

In the Autumn Austin and I had great fun hosting a confirmation group for our candidates Alice, Bethany and Sophie, and we also held "START" for adults this year for the first time, exploring the Christian faith together. The Harvest and Climate Sunday celebrations were imaginative and well-attended, and we were delighted to be awarded our Bronze "Eco-Church" award. Well done to Annie Hilder, Michelle Pegley, Simon Curd, Sarah Reader, and all the Eco-Church team for encouraging us on our climate journey, and to Ben Hilder for his magnificent "Bug Church" which is now situated outside the hall.

It was both poignant and liberating to be able to light individual candles in remembrance of those whom we love, but see no longer at our "All Saints" remembrance in the service on the 30th October, and great to welcome Brownies back into church for our Remembrance Sunday service. It was very moving to be led by them in our Act of Remembrance, and to sing "God save our gracious King" for the first time.

Wasn't it great to gather and celebrate Christmas all together with gusto again? The Christmas Tree Festival facilitated by the Social and Fundraising committee caught everyone's imagination; many thanks to them, and to all the members of all the groups who caught the vision, joined in and created some stunning and thoughtful displays. Let's do it again this year! It was heartening to have so many coming to celebrate Christmas with us from the local community and beyond, and again many thanks to David Collett and the rest of the worship team, the singing group, including Alex Hilder who sang the solos so beautifully as always, the welcomers and readers and profferers of mulled wine and mince pies, the Christingle makers, and invitation post-ers, Ben Hilder with his own take on the year's events through his narration of our nativity story, and so many other people who helped in so many ways...

Many thanks again to our church officers; to David Collett, Michelle Pegley, and Annie Hilder our wardens for keeping us going so cheerfully and optimistically. Thanks again to Tim and Kamala Blatt, our diligent and faithful church treasurers, and to Kay Wheatley for taking on the role of PCC Secretary. Thanks to Russell Pearson and Christine Perera for managing the church hall in a busy year when we welcomed an after school and holiday club for local families. Thanks also to our PCC members, who have worked so hard to represent you in keeping everything going and looking to the future.

Thanks also to our Worship Team, our wonderful organists Annie Hilder and Austin Penn, our service helpers Alex Hilder and Sharon Collett and the Sunday School team, The First Steps team, the Reigate Grange team, the Coffee Morning team, and everyone, too numerous to mention, who has supported St Philip's in any way, big or small, this year. It really wouldn't be the same without you!

Looking forward there are quite a few challenges ahead, but let us thank God for all the blessings he has given us this year on our journey of faith together and place ourselves in his hands, trusting him to provide for us, and guide us, as he has done so faithfully in the past.

Churchwardens' report: Michelle Pegley and Annie Hilder

Churchwardens Michelle Pegley and Annie Hilder have been supported by David Collett who stepped down as warden in 2022 but his knowledge of the buildings and his many years' experience in the role have been invaluable. Thank you, David!

On 26th March 2023, Annie and Michelle met the Area Dean, Revd Martin Colton of St Mark's when he carried out our annual inspection. There were no specific action points following this inspection but topics of discussion included recovery from the pandemic and the deanery's focus on environmental issues.

Both churchwardens attended the 'swearing-in' at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Carshalton on 8th June 2023 accompanied by Revd Jenny Penn and Revd Eileen Stangan. This was a very special service, led by the Archdeacon of Reigate, Moira Astin, and was the first that had taken place since the pandemic.

Services at St Philip's returned largely to normal in 2022 as Covid 19 restrictions lifted. Welcomers resumed their role as sidespeople, directing the congregation to the altar rail to take communion and back to their seats via a 'one-way' system. We had become unused to moving around during the service and this part of it was a little chaotic and noisy at first but with guidance from Jenny and the team, calm has been restored. Welcomers continue to provide 'busy bags' of toys for small children and activity sheets for our young people when Sunday School is not on, both of which have been very well received.

An inspection of the church's fixed electrical wiring (heating and lighting) was due by the end of 2022 but was actually postponed until 9th January 2023. As a goodwill gesture, the company also completed an inspection of the church hall on the same day. The PCC will consider the recommendations in the report and commission further work as necessary.

Our 'Statistics for Mission' were submitted to the Diocese ahead of the deadline of 31st January, giving a full account of the numbers of services, attendance figures and information about our Fresh Expressions and other outreach activities in the community. On Saturday 1st April 2023, Archdeacon Moira will inspect the church as is required every 3 years. The wardens will submit "Articles of Enquiry" to the Diocese beforehand, to be discussed at this meeting.

Looking ahead, our five-yearly "Quinquennial" inspection of the church building by our architect Sue Kent falls in 2023 so we are in the process of arranging a date for this.

Electoral Roll Officer's Report: Michelle Pegley

A revision of the Electoral Roll for St Philip's took place between 29th January and 19th February 2023. The revision was advertised using the monthly online newsletter and weekly pew sheets and announcements during Notices at the start of services. A notice was also displayed by the church entrance giving 2 weeks notice of the revision. 15 names were removed from the roll and 15 were added so the total number on the roll remains at 116, unchanged from last year. Approximately one third (43) are residents of the Parish and 73 reside outside of the Parish.

PCC Secretary's report: Kay Wheatley

The PCC has met five times since the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting and consists of Revd Jenny Penn(Chair), Revd Eileen Stanghan(ex-officio), Annie Hilder (Churchwarden) and Michelle Pegley (Churchwarden), Tim Blatt (Treasurer and elected PCC member), Kay Wheatley (PCC Secretary) and six other elected members.

The average attendance at meetings has been ten. Highlights of PCC meetings are published in Pew News and the newsletter and the PCC deals with the general administration of the parish and complying with Deanery and Diocesan requests.

Treasurer's Report: Tim and Kamala Blatt

The Financial Statements for the parish show the Receipts and Payments for 2022 alongside the comparative figures for 2021. These accounts were approved by the PCC on 31st January 2023 and we have received confirmation from our Independent Examiner that she has completed her review.

During 2022 there was an overall excess of receipts over payments of £15,583. This surplus compares with a surplus in 2021 of £3,412. The main reason for this surplus is that during the year we received additional income from Giving, a grant from the diocese re fuel and a £5,000 legacy.

Incoming resources from donors (Planned Giving, Collections at services, Donations and Tax recovered) amounted to £32,707 in 2022 which was an increase of £5,628 from 2021 (£27,079). Income from interest & investments and garages totalled £13,220 (2021: £11,298).

The main payments during 2022 were the Diocesan Parish Contribution (£35,200), church running costs and building maintenance costs.

During 2022 the Hall generated income of £12,942 with expenditure of £5,959, a surplus of £6,983.

The Investment Funds, held by the Diocese as Custodian Trustee, stand at £355,614 at 31 December 2022, an overall decrease in value of £33,267.

We would like to record our thanks to everyone who has helped us with our duties throughout the year especially our independent examiner, Helen Ainsworth, and our Assistant Treasurers, David Collett and Annie Hilder.

Deanery Synod: Jenny Penn

Reigate Deanery (www.reigatedeanery.org.uk) is one of the largest of the 25 deaneries in the Diocese of Southwark. The Deanery presents an opportunity for the parishes to work together, sharing resources, experiences and opinions so that the mission of the church can be enhanced in exciting and fresh ways. The 22 parishes in the deanery together contribute £1.35 million towards the £16 million total budget of our Diocese.

The Synod meets three times a year in different churches around the Deanery. Each church is represented by their clergy and lay representatives, our representatives being Rev Jenny Penn and Mrs Annie Hilder in 2022. The current membership of Deanery Synod is around 120 with an average attendance at meetings of around 50.

The 22nd February meeting was held on Zoom during which Revd Martin Colton, our new Area Dean, was commissioned by Bishop Jonathan of Croydon. At the meeting there were also updates from local churches as to where each of them was on the "ECO Church" journey, with the intention of sharing best practice and encouraging one another along the way. The Reigate Archdeaconry Social Justice Focus (RASJF) encouraged parishes to sign the "anti-slavery pledge", alongside local businesses in an effort to raise awareness of and to counter modern slavery and people trafficking.

Following on from this there was a presentation on modern slavery including what to look for and who to contact with concerns, at our meeting on 29th June at St Bartholomew's Horley, as well as the usual updates and reports from around the Deanery.

Our friend Harriet Pearson, chair of SparkFish, gave a presentation on their work across local schools at our meeting at St Mark's, Reigate on 20th October. There were also updates on the local food banks, Mothers' Union, and safeguarding training.

Pledged Regular Giving: Tim Blatt

The number of parishioners who give through some form of planned regular giving has risen since last year (an increase of 4). This regular giving can take the form of payment by banker's order, weekly envelopes or through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) that St Philip's joined this year.

We would encourage church members to consider giving by one of these methods and we would be happy to supply further information on these schemes.

The numbers who gave by these methods in 2022 are shown below:

<u>Method</u>	<u>Current Number</u>
Weekly	4
Monthly banker's order	25
Monthly through PGS	10
Quarterly banker's order	3
Annual banker's order	2
Total	44

During 2022 a total of £18,051 was donated by pledged regular giving, an increase from previous years.

St Philip's Church Hall: Jenny Penn

Our church hall is one of the ways in which we seek to serve the local community, with (sometimes) a small surplus in income towards church funds.

2022 was much more of a "normal" year, after all the restrictions of the pandemic. The hall is well used; this year we have been host to many activities, including children's parties, residents' group meetings, a Reigate and Banstead Polling Day, Brownies and Guides, our Tuesday Coffee Morning, an after school club and children's holiday club, a therapy group, badminton and karate clubs, a drama group, ballroom dancing practice, and of course our coffee after services.

Mr Russell Pearson in charge of hall operations. Russell has introduced running improvements as time and finances permit, including getting us started with a shared electronic hall calendar and remote-controlled heating, which make life a lot easier. When our cleaner left, Russell very kindly took on that as well, which was a great help. Mrs Christine Perera is in charge of lettings, patiently dealing with all the different enquiries about the hall and the logistics of lettings. Many thanks to both of you for keeping the hall running so smoothly.

Social and Fundraising Committee: Michelle Pegley

Although there was still some nervousness at the start of 2022, the congregation at St. Philip's is becoming increasingly sociable with much larger numbers staying for coffee and cake after services. The refreshments team is also growing but with some volunteers joining other groups, for instance, as Sunday School helpers, we will continue to need support from our lovely coffee hosts! Thank you to all who help out with the washing up too!

It is particularly good to be able to share special occasions in this way. On Good Friday, we enjoyed hot cross buns, Victoria Sponge for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and at Christmas, homemade mince pies and gingerbread. Mince Pies, chocolate cake and mulled wine were served at the end of a packed Carol Service on 12th December - the urn ran dry!

Christmas Trees

From late November, the various groups at St Philip's got to work on creating eco-friendly Christmas tree decorations to adorn trees that could stand or hang in the windows of St Philip's for the festive period. These were installed in time for the Carol Service and remained into the New Year. The groups worked with the flowers team to ensure a coherent, natural and beautiful display. Pride of place was the 'vintage' artificial tree decorated by Sunday School with bright and bold creations worked on over several weeks. Thanks go to Helen Jerome for the idea (and for her skill with power tools!) and for everyone who took part in this project which we would like to develop for Christmas 2023.

Quiz Night

Planning has begun for our quiz evening on 18th March 2023. Our quizmaster, Roger Hillier, is booked, and several teams are already signed up. Proceeds will fund maintenance and improvements to the church hall. We are looking forward to an evening of brain-teasing and friendly rivalry!

Child Protection and Safeguarding: Eileen Stanghan (Parish Safeguarding Officer)

We are very blessed that we have so many willing helpers working with children and young people at St Philip's. After ten new helpers joined the Sunday School team when it re-started in 2021 and received DBS clearance, 2022 was a case of keeping up with things; ensuring that everyone has up to date certification and training. If you have a DBS for your work at St Philip's please can you make sure I have had sight of it for my records, and check that it is up to date; I can help you to renew if necessary.

All those with DBS and church officers (including PCC members) need to have completed the Church of England online "Basic Awareness" and "Foundation" safeguarding courses. Each takes about an hour to complete and covers safeguarding basics as well as some things that are specific to church situations. These courses are free and can be accessed on the C of E Safeguarding training portal on <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

You will need to set up an account on the portal but this means you can do parts of the courses and come back to them when convenient to you. Again, please let me know when you have completed these for my records.

With growing numbers, our Sunday School is expanding into two groups after Easter this year, and we have again been blessed with nine new helpers coming forward, so I am currently working through the DBS process with all of these.

Sunday School: Niki Hurst-Smith, Lindsay Hill and Bev Herneman

Sunday School went from strength to strength in 2022 with our wonderful team of helpers and lots of enthusiastic children! Many thanks to all of our volunteers, and to Bev and Lindsay who co-ordinate the team with me. Thanks also to Eileen for helping out and for making sure that all the DBSs are in place as our Church Safeguarding Officer.

The Sunday school team had the responsibility of decorating the church Christmas tree, and the team led by Anne Stevens created a "Christmas spectacular" which was followed by a performance in church of "The twelve days of Christmas". The kids came up with the actions themselves and did brilliantly on the day.

We have seen a significant increase in the number of children attending Sunday school which is fantastic. It has led to us considering how we manage it, so the kids have a good experience and it is manageable for the volunteers.

We are currently in the process of training up more volunteers and plan to multiply Sunday school into two groups; one group for reception to year 2, and one for children in years 3-6. We are hoping to implement this change from Easter 2023.

Tuesday Coffee and Conversation (chat) group: Sue Sargent

Tuesday coffee mornings are still going strong. We regularly have between 18 and 26 people attending – both men and women – some attend Church others are from the local community.

We make regular donations to Church funds and have again sponsored Larry the donkey who resides in the Isle of Wight where several members have visited him. We have also bought some hens through the Leprosy Fund. When the DEC fund was launched by the Government at the start of the Ukraine war I made a collection at one of our coffee mornings and was very pleased to be able to send a Gift Aided donation for £250.00.

There is a rota for those who wish to provide refreshments or a raffle – expenses paid – and to make the coffee.

Do please join us one Tuesday morning for some company, a good cup of coffee or tea, maybe a raffle prize and some lively conversation all for £2.50.

First Steps: Jenny Penn

First Steps is our group for pre-school small people and their carers, meeting once a month in church on Friday mornings for nursery rhymes, songs, and stories in a very informal service followed by “cutting and sticking” and refreshments. It’s great to get together, and never a dull moment!

It was wonderful to be able to re-start First Steps again in September 2022 after the pandemic closures. Many thanks to all our team of volunteer helpers who make it possible; Doreen, Eileen, Christine, Michelle, Helen, Austin, Susan and Kay. As all the children who were previously in First Steps have now moved on the school and nursery we weren’t sure how many there would be in September, but were delighted when a new “congregation” started growing. At present we have around seventeen families on our books, although they don’t all come at once... If you have a pre-schooler do join us, it would be lovely to see you!

Online reflection groups: Jenny Penn

Our WhatsApp and email reflection groups are a good, low-key way of keeping in touch with God and each other with a short reflection and a picture each day. We currently have around sixty-five people between the two groups, from St Philip’s and from further afield, but there is always room for more; do let me know if you would like to join in.

It felt right to space the groups out a bit again this year as people have taken on more things since the restrictions associated with lockdown have eased. We enjoyed some “Barefoot Prayers” based on the book by Stephen Cherry for Lent, and explored our very own Advent Calendar over Advent. Thanks again to everyone who has kept in touch in this way; it’s been great to journey together!

"Sharing God's Love" at Reigate Grange Residential Home: Jenny Penn

“Sharing God’s love” is a team of volunteers who share worship with residents at Reigate Grange once a month and chat with them after services over a cup of tea. I am delighted to report that during 2022 we were able to conduct services of the word once more from August, after a long break due to Covid isolation by Reigate Grange. From the Carol Service on 21st December we have also been able to resume taking in a team from St Philip’s again, many thanks to Robin and Doreen! If you would like to join us on a Thursday morning once a month you are most welcome. Thanks also to Austin who has joined the team, playing the grand piano before and after services, and as an accompaniment to our singing. Austin and I have recently also started experimenting with a very short, informal service on the “Hilltops” floor, which houses people living with dementia.

Residents still watch St Philip's recorded services on Tuesday mornings in the activity room; we have loaned them some of our hymn books and they are happy to join in with the singing. It's lovely to have them as part of our congregation in this way. We have also been able to keep in contact with residents via the newsletter.

Communion services at the Abbeyfield Community: Jenny Penn

Monthly "Home Communion" services continued at the Abbeyfield Community all through 2022. There are usually around six of us in attendance for a short service, with coffee afterwards. The renovation works are now all complete and as Covid restrictions have eased Abbeyfield is looking to reach out to the local community more, as well as serving its residents. They were delighted to offer hospitality to the Tuesday Coffee Morning a couple of times over the summer, and to offer a "cool space" in their conservatory at the height of the heat wave. It was also great to have carols at Abbeyfield for the first time on December 16th, thanks to some members of the music group who came along and led the singing. Many thanks again to Elizabeth Shroff, a resident and member of the congregation, for her organisation, encouragement, and unfailing optimism!

4th Reigate Brownies: Elaine Eagleton

It was lovely to be able to get back to normal meetings in the Church Hall in 2022. We changed our hours slightly to accommodate the after-school club, but that worked out very well.

For many of our sessions we followed the Guiding programme, exploring issues such as bullying, inclusivity and ways of communicating including the phonetic alphabet and sign language. We found out how wind farms worked and learned about food miles. We had a food tasting session to find out whether more expensive foods always tasted the best (they don't!).

As usual we included a lot of craft in our sessions. We made Chinese Dragons to celebrate Chinese New Year and bunnies out of washcloths for Easter. For Mother's Day the girls made vases of flowers out of card, and for Father's Day they painted pebbles with messages for their Dads. We had fun making puppets out of old socks. For Christmas we made jolly elves out of toilet roll tubes.

During the Summer Term, the Brownies made and sent cards to the Queen to celebrate her 80 years on the throne. They were very pleased to receive a reply from Windsor Castle.

They made bunting which we used when we held a Jubilee Tea Party for the Brownies and their families in Priory Park.

Possibly the most fun evenings were when the Brownies made kites and flew them in the park, and when we had a visit from 'Kid's Critters'. They brought a huge tortoise, snakes and lizards for the Brownies to meet.

The Brownies attended the Harvest service at the Church and collected items to donate to the food bank. We made Poppy crosses that the Brownies placed around the altar on Remembrance Sunday. The Brownies took part in the ceremony including lowering the flag.

They also participated in the Carol Service doing readings and singing their traditional 'Away in a Manger'.

11th Reigate Guides report: Mary Collett-Gooding

I am writing this report for St Philip's APCM for sadly the last time. Since the last meeting the 11th Guides have amalgamated with the 1st Meadvale Guides. This time last year as a result partly due to lockdown our numbers were low and we were unable to find any more adult help. So reluctantly we made plans for the future; we discovered that there was another small group at Meadvale who also met on a Monday night therefore in the summer term we began the process of joining the units. Now almost a year later we are one unit who are flourishing. At the end of the summer term their assistant Guider left, therefore, although, not every week I am now an assistant leader. The two units have worked well together and our girls are achieving. I continue to be grateful of our time at St Philip's; as you might know a very special place for me. I hope at some future point there will be Guides again at St Philip's.

St Philip's Flower Team: Sarah Reader

The flowers in Church this year have reflected the eco church principles of sustainable, environmentally friendly and locally grown. The flowers have been mainly home grown with foraged and garden foliage. This year I'm proud to report that the church flowers have been completely foam free! That means no more plastic green foam going to land fill and we have been reusing chicken wire instead to create some of the larger arrangements.

Highlights of the year include doing the Easter flowers and filling the church with Spring colour after a period of no flowers, the Harvest festival flowers with their array of vibrant colours and my favourite autumn flower the Dahlia (nearly lost through an early frost).

Decorating the church for Christmas was made special this year by being joined by all the different Church groups as they decorated their Christmas trees.

This year I would like to explore creating a cutting flower patch in the area outside the church and have started off a few flower seeds at home.

We would like to continue to decorate the church with flowers throughout the year and would encourage anyone interested in helping to speak to myself or Zanna. There will also be a flower rota put up at the back of church to sign up to if you are able to help on any of the empty weeks, no flower arranging experience needed!

St Philip's ECO- group: Sarah Reader

We have had a good year – working towards and meeting the requirements to achieve the A Rocha Bronze award. Areas of focus included Worship and Teaching, Land and Buildings and Lifestyle. Thankfully St Philips was already achieving many of the goals needed to reach the Bronze target, and with a final push we secured the award in October 2022.

A noticeboard area in Church highlights opportunities and tips for greener ways of living and worshiping, and in the autumn we installed our Bug Church, hopefully already home to a great many tiny but vital members of God's great society. Eco Sunday allowed us to sing the wonderful hymns that tell of and worship creation, and we have interspersed and intend to continue, relevant items and suggestions into our worship. An Eco Church Team Christmas Tree was proudly part of the wonderful Christmas Tree festival.

We are now working towards the Silver Award, enjoying the opportunity to focus on the initiatives and pass these on to the Church members, whilst ensuring that our little corner of the planet is doing all it can to preserve and safeguard God's wonderful creation.

Music and singing Group Report – Annie Hilder

The group gathered during 2022 to practice hymns for focussed, more special services during the Church year such as Easter, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas. Such has been the success and enjoyment of the gatherings for these times that Austin and Annie decided to have more regular monthly or so meetings throughout 2023, to intersperse and contribute signing and music throughout the year on more occasions, but above all for the fellowship and pleasure of joining with friends for an hour and having a good old sing of some old (and new) favourites!

We would always encourage new joiners, with no requirement or need of audition – just enthusiasm and volume! We look forward to singing and introducing new hymns to the congregation throughout the coming year, and are grateful to all who come along for their commitment and humour, and the pleasure that the get togethers brings.

Annie has thoroughly enjoyed another year of playing the Organ for the services and music group. She is always grateful for opportunities to blend in pertinent hymns that speak so richly of the themes of our Worship. She is always grateful for the robustness and wonderful voice of the congregation, who whatever or whenever the error or missed last verse, continue to sing with such wonderful voice!

Garden Team: Sandra Ellis-Smith and Sue Ballardie

Many thanks for the kind comments we have received; it has given us great pleasure to see the garden come into bloom. Our thanks go to Austin for his help taking out stubborn roots and repairing the hall wall, we are pleased the rockery plants have taken.

Looking forward to another colourful summer!

"Holy Dusters" church cleaners: Sandra Ellis-Smith

The "Holy Dusters" team is currently myself, Sue, Christine, Liz and Jenny.

We meet on the first Wednesday of each Month at around 9.30 for about an hour to dust, polish, Hoover and tidy the church, we also manage a good natter! It would be good to have another helper.

We feel proud of our beautiful little church; we are so lucky it is kept open in the week for quiet prayer as well Sunday Worship.

This year our artistic talents were put to the challenge when we were asked to decorate a Christmas tree window!!

And finally...

Many thanks to all those mentioned in this report, and to everyone who has helped in any way to make our church the lively and vibrant community it is. We pray that God will bless us and guide us in the coming year as we journey on together.

Revd Jenny Penn

Vicar

Date: 12th March 2023