

**The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of  
St John the Baptist, Croydon**



**St George's Church**

The Heart of Christ in  
The Heart of Waddon

**Annual Report on the life of our Parish  
APCM May 2023**



## Message from Fr Andrew & Fr David

We hope you enjoy reading this report of life in our parish over the last year or so. It puts flesh on the 'dry bones' of the formal report to give a vibrant picture of our parish, illustrated by some great photos too.



On a journey it is always important to know where you have travelled from, as that helps you understand better where you are and gives you bearings for where you are going.

As we look back over the past year we can see signs of God's grace and blessing. It is a story of people coming together in worship, witness and service, in times of celebration and commemoration and at the great festivals of the Church. We have welcomed new members of the Church through baptism, celebrated marriages,

commended the dead and comforted the grieving at funerals, as well as losing from our number in particular Margaret Dickens, Beverly Smith, Martin How and, most recently, Fr Peter Smith.

So we look to the rest of 2023 and into 2024. Challenges and opportunities abound. We know that the Minster grounds will undergo their (long planned) regeneration, which is timely following the vandalism in the churchyard; St George's will require work on leaking dormer windows; the Minster will begin the next phase of planning for a new church hall (Minster Centre); the PCC will be considering how to use the substantial legacy received from Martin How.

Such projects require energy and commitment, and a sense of purpose as to what we are doing and why. For example, the hall project at the Minster will enable the mission of the church to flourish in our community and work together.

It's not just about projects. Within the arc of our worship of God, faithfully offered daily in our parish across our two churches, the Christian task of discipleship and growing in holiness is the true measure of our parish life. For the Minster that is about inhabiting the aspiration to be a church that is, 'welcoming and open, where people find life and joy and belonging in Christ' and for St George's to be a church showing 'the Heart of Christ in the Heart of Waddon'. Together we have also worked with the Separated Child Foundation to respond lovingly to the needs of child migrants.

All this we entrust to the Lord and ask his strength and grace in what is to come. In all our endeavours may the Lord bless us, and may St John the Baptist and St George the Martyr and all the saints of God pray for us.

Fr Andrew 

## Report from the PCC

The Parochial Church Council is made up of clergy, wardens and members of the Minster and St George's congregations. In order to be on the PCC, all members must be in good standing and all are asked to sign PCC Member Trustee Eligibility Declaration forms. The Parish has Charity status so all PCC members are trustees of the charity and are responsible for the overall wellbeing, practical as well as spiritual, of their church, the church members, and the church buildings. The PCC also has a duty to promote the mission of the church within the wider community.

In the calendar year 2022 the PCC met 4 times. Major issues addressed were as follows:

**Parish Support Fund** – The Parish Support Fund (PSF) resources the costs of our clergy and the support given to each parish in the Diocese of Southwark. Each year parishes are invited to make a pledge to the PSF which is realistic, challenging, and generous. These pledges fund our shared mission in each community in every part of the Diocese. In 2022 the Minster supported the Diocese with £80,000 and St George's with £11, 684. Both churches have increased their pledges for 2023 to £81,600 (Minster) and £12,125 (St George's).

**Governance** – The 2022 APCM began to model how the governance of the parish needed to evolve over the coming year, that is to say we are one parish with two churches. The PCC is for the whole parish, not just one church within it. Each church requires a District Church Council (DCC), and so the Minster must establish one. The PCC then may delegate certain (but not all) powers to the DCCs. In this model decisions affecting each church are made at the most local level, but in certain areas the PCC has to approve the decision.

**Staff Handbook** – The PCC is an employer and therefore has employer responsibilities to its employees. The PCC discussed employment at the Minster and St George's and what is needed to be put in place to meet statutory obligations and duty of care so that there is clarity for employees. The inaugural Handbook has now been written; as and when the law changes, the handbook will be updated and approved by the PCC.

**Risk Register** – This has been developed for the parish. The intention is to enable us to be aware and realistic about potential risks, considering the probability of an occurrence and its potential impact on the ministry and mission of the church. The PCC was asked to consider then adopt this as working document that is reviewed regularly to enable the PCC to maintain its oversight with the incumbent of the whole mission of the church.

### Policies

#### i) Safeguarding

The updated Safeguarding Policy was approved as the policy for the whole Parish of Croydon. The Safeguarding Policy states that Denise Mead and Anne Tanner are our two Safeguarding Officers. Both



are happy to continue in role. The Parish now has a safeguarding provision document which must be signed by anyone hiring premises at either church.

### ii) Domestic Abuse Policy

The Diocese has provided a template policy, which the PCC has adapted and agreed for adoption in the Parish.

### iii) GDPR Policy

This has been updated and will be in use for both The Minster and St. George's – the whole Parish.

**Energy Expenditure** – The Church of England has called on all churches to reduce their emissions year-on-year, aiming for a target of net zero by 2030 at the latest, and requiring progress to be regularly reviewed. With this in mind, the PCC discussed the cost of escalating fuel bills with a view to an action plan for the Winter months' however, at present, both churches are still benefitting from fixed rate plans. The PCC is aware that costs must be monitored and both churches are looking at options for more efficient heating/energy provision in the future.

## St George's DCC

The St George's DCC has been meeting regularly for many years now, and will this year be fully incorporated at the APCM. The DCC meets regularly every other month and discusses issues relevant to St George's. Particular thanks go to Lynne Kerwood, the DCC secretary. Issues the DCC has been considering this year include our Mission Action Plan at St George's, the maintenance of our building, and our finances, where we have managed to turn a deficit into a surplus.

## Fabric Reports

### The Minster

Once every 5 years, we are required to undergo an inspection which involves a qualified chartered surveyor visiting the church in person to conduct a visual inspection of the building's current state of repair. The Minster's QI took place in August and, thanks to the major projects undertaken over the previous 5 years, it did not uncover any major defects. Once again we were praised for our consistent maintenance of our building. There are a few minor issues of pointing and repairs to roof slates, which will require a specialist stonemason, or roof specialist, to be completed in the next year or so.

Other ongoing projects include

- Clocks – The clocks are now ringing again – big thanks to Simon Bensberg for sorting this out. The QI mentioned the need to renovate the clock faces, which will require raising some £25k as mentioned in last year's report. However, the clocks are safe and working, so while this is desirable, it is not urgent.
- Sound System – This is an ongoing project, which has been somewhat put aside, due to other issues taking priority. However, a strategy needs to be put in place for raising the funds to complete phases 2 & 3 as referenced in last year's report.



A continuing concern for us has been maintenance of the exterior of the building – clearing of surface gullies, roof gullies and drainage hoppers, trimming foliage and clearing litter and refuse. Huge thanks are due to the group of people who have undertaken this – the stalwarts are Simon Jewell, Dave and Ann Young, Melvyn Mead and Penny Hall but there are others who join on an ad hoc basis, for which we are very grateful.

Further to the news on the exterior, we are hopeful that Croydon Council will move forward with its regeneration plans in 2023 – the trees and bushes that have been cleared have made a big difference in opening out areas around the church to limit antisocial behaviour and to let more light into the church. We hope to have more details on how they will implement their exciting plans very soon.

Pamela Hall, Churchwarden

### **St George's**

The quinquennial at St George's is due in June 2023. Since our last inspection, the pandemic has restricted our ability to complete some of the works required on the building, however there is only one urgent item outstanding, which we hope to complete this summer in the dry weather – the repainting of the railings around the Churchyard.

We have throughout the year held a couple of work days where members of the congregation have helped with the regular tasks, like cleaning and drain clearing. A particular thanks to those people who have helped.

2022 saw significant tree work at St George's as a survey indicated that two of our trees were dangerous, and needed felling. This work has been completed thanks to people donating very generously to cover the cost.

Over the year we have had several leaks through our roof during heavy rain, and some inspection work has found that the dormer windows are rotting. We expect this to be picked up in the QI report, and it will be a large piece of work over the next few years to fundraise and complete.

Fr David

## **Report on our Sidespeople**



I would like to thank everyone who has volunteered and gave their time and assistance as Sidespeople over the past year. Thankfully, 2022 saw the ending of Covid restrictions which meant that stewarding team were once again able to concentrate on welcoming worshippers and visitors to the Minster.

As you will have noticed we were able to introduce new members to the team; Jamie Carswell, Trisha Daniel, Sandra Craig, Mary & Vincent Atigla, Linda Wong and Ambrose Roberts all joined the team following a recruitment drive. We also welcomed back Alison Kenney.

Since we no longer collect the offerings during the service, we have taken the decision to move the card reader and offering bowl to a table near the door. This enables members of the congregation to make their donations as they enter or leave the church.

Finally, I would like to thank our former Deputy Churchwarden, Karen Stewart for her long service and support as Sidesperson.

Arlene Esdaile, Churchwarden

## Wardens at St George's

Carol Milgate and Mark Mason have had a busy 2022 as District Wardens at St George's, particularly in organising the social events that play such a large part in the life of this Church. We also had a very good inspection from the Assistant Area Dean, and found to be in good order.

It was a particularly joyful occasion to support Carol and Mark as they were sworn in for the year.



## Report from our Servers

It was with much relief that we were able to fully reintroduce our Minster serving team in September 2021.



Fr Andrew revamped the servers' duties and the team have taken to these new roles very well. We were able to attract some youngsters to act as Boats (carrying the incense pot) and in turn they will be integrated into the team when they feel ready to do so.

Fr Andrew decided we ought to revamp the servers' robes and introduced the Cottas which are shorter, more practical garments I am indebted to Sue Williams for laundering the servers' robes with such care and love.

5.30pm or 7.00pm Sung Eucharists have been introduced on Festival & Feast days and these are now being opened up to the serving team.

We are always looking for servers, so if you feel you have a calling, please do speak to me.

Denise Mead, Sacristan

Serving at St George's has gone from strength to strength under the leadership of Mark Mason, and the number of servers has increased since the end of 2021, when the serving was reintroduced.

Fr David

## Music at The Minster

Throughout the past year the Minster Choral Foundation has continued to enrich our worship and parish life. Numbers all around are healthy; we are fortunate to not have any difficulty recruiting choristers, although we could always do with more tenors and adults for the Minster Consort. The choirs have tackled a great deal of repertoire new to them - for the choristers there is normally at least one new piece each week. In addition to ensuring that we are always singing music appropriate to each seasonal liturgy, it has had the added benefit of improving sightreading and keeping everyone on their toes. The carol service trilogy – Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany/Candlemas – was augmented by a moving Passiontide service in March; and for me this was one of the musical and liturgical highlights of the year. In addition to our usual services of Choral Evensong on weekdays, we have begun offering more mid-week sung services of Holy Eucharist on feast days, and I do commend these to you.

We saw the return of choral concerts to the Minster in November (*Lux Aeterna*) and December (*Christmas Cheer!*), and I am grateful to those who supported these events, including the parents who helped with the organisation. There were several substantial services including the civic memorial



service for Her Late Majesty the Queen, and the funeral and memorial service for our dear friend Martin How. The choristers were honoured to sing Martin's gorgeous *Lullaby* on our BBC Radio 3 broadcast in December.

As well as a flurry of new probationers, who are just beginning to make appearances on Sundays, there have been several additions to the team. George Incoe came on board as Sub Organist in September, dazzling us with his sensitive accompaniment and voluntaries, and although not a new face, Sophie

Garbisu was appointed Singing Development Leader at the same time. Sophie is doing tremendous vocal work with the choristers, choral scholars, and in four primary schools. Graduate Music Assistants Fraser Ellson and Oliver Turner joined us in September, and together they have offered valuable support in the choir stalls and behind the scenes.

It is always a joy to share our music and worship with others, and the choirs were pleased to welcome two visiting choirs – the Choir of All Saints' Church, Northampton and Capella Dorestead (NL) to sing with us. The girls and lower voices made a trip to Guilford Cathedral in February and sang in St George's on the eve of St George's Day. In January some of the choristers and choral scholars took part in a spectacular concert with the Gabrieli Consort in Westminster Cathedral. Now that Covid isn't so much of a worry, we hope to be on the road again touring further afield, although this is no easy feat with such a large choir.

Having received a generous grant from the Cathedral Music Trust, we launched *Croydon Sings!* in September to expand our outreach to primary schools in the parish. Sophie leads singing sessions in four schools each week, and in December we welcomed the pupils and their families to the Minster for a carol service. The turnout for the service was tremendous, and for many it was their first time in our spiritual home. Our final project for this year is a concert called *Ship Ahoy* on 1<sup>st</sup> July at 3pm. Once again, we will welcome the children and their families to the Minster, this time to sing *Captain Noah*

*and His Floating Zoo* alongside the choristers. The funding for this community project will only take us through this academic year, and as a parish we will need prayerfully to consider whether we have the resources to continue doing this important work with our local children. Music education in schools continues to diminish and sharing our wealth of resources is more crucial than ever.

Our department is proudly one of the largest and most diverse in the country, and we could not maintain and promote it without the help of many hands. I am indebted to Denise, Diane, and our army of chaperones for keeping the choristers robed, fed, watered, and safe. The lunchtime recitals continue to attract good audiences and promote young players, and we are grateful to Pamela Hall for organising the series. The dedication and expertise of the adults of the choir does not go unnoticed, nor do the miles of transport provided by the parents. The department is fortunate to have the support and prayers of our wonderful clergy, and I would like to express my thanks, on behalf of the choir, to Fr Andrew and his team for all that they do. Finally, I would like to thank each member of the parish for their continued commitment to our flourishing department – as you will have read above there are many reasons to rejoice!

Justin Miller, Director of Music

## Lunchtime Recitals 2022/23

One of the legacies of the pandemic has been that performing arts students and recent graduates are thirsty for opportunities to perform to the wider public. This has paid dividends to our Lunchtime Recital Series and such has been the enthusiasm for taking part that we were able to fill our entire 2022/23 season (all 3 series) by November. Understandably we get a few cancellations due to young graduates earning auditions with major orchestras or opportunities to go on tour, but there are always more who are happy to fill in at short notice.

As in previous years, recitalists included gifted students from Old Palace, Trinity, and Croydon High schools as well as students from the major London conservatoires, and our own professional musicians from the Minster. As a result, we have enjoyed a varied programme of the highest calibre of performance, much enjoyed by the very enthusiastic and loyal audience, which holds at a steady 25-30 members. Many are long-term regulars, and we have gained a few more this season.



We are also delighted that donations from the audience are sufficiently generous that we can now offer expenses to our London-based recitalists to enable them to travel out to Croydon. Given that we cannot pay them anything like what their performances warrant, this goes some way to show our appreciation of their gifts.

Once more, we would like to pay tribute to the wonderful and committed team of ushers who volunteer their Friday lunchtimes to welcome the recitalists and audience: David Morgan, Frances Martin, Diane Edwards, Sue Kibler, Chris Shields, Elaine Cooper, Carol Jewell, Sue Williams and Ann Young – thank you!



We ask your prayers for support in spreading the word that these recitals exist and encouraging more people to come and enjoy a different form of outreach and ministry that Croydon Minster offers to the wider community.

Pamela Hall

## Report from the Flower Team

We were sorry to lose Christine Patient from the flower team due to family commitments. Christine has been part of the team for many years and has also helped with the Mothering Sunday posies. Our thanks go out to her.

We are now a team of two! I would like to thank Diana Hemmings for helping me throughout the year.

It would be lovely if just one or two other members of the minster family could offer their help, if not on a regular basis maybe for Easter, Harvest and Christmas when several arrangements are required around the church. If anyone is able to help in this way, please speak to me for more information.

Today with the increased cost of flowers I now have a selection of artificial flowers which I mix with the fresh flowers and greenery.

If you would like to donate towards fresh flowers during the year for special occasions in remembrance of a loved one, anniversaries or birthdays please contact Denise Mead in the office.

I look forward to hearing from you if you feel you are able to get involved.

Penny Hall, Head Flower Arranger



## Report from the Bellringers

Our year has been more settled than the previous two, with numbers turning up for ringing remaining viable. We are lucky to attract regular competent visitors from the district on a Tuesday, and our ringing is all the better for it.

This last year has had its last-minute calls on our time and our band have risen to the challenge. After the death of HM the Queen, there were several occasions when we needed to be in the tower with virtually no notice. Our ringers were ever helpful and I was never left without a quorum or a volunteer. We now look towards the challenges of ringing for the Coronation, which will be covered with our usual enthusiasm.



A country-wide drive for more ringers “Ring for the King” has fortunately provided us with two new learners, Izzy and Adam. They are quick to learn and are making remarkable progress; although the Press and Media grossly underestimated how long it takes to learn to ring – but they will certainly be ringing soon after the King is crowned!

Our ringing calendar in the Association is beginning to pick up post Covid. We will be entering some ringing competitions in the Summer and are already holders of the Quiz Trophy (hotly contested).

We have, as ever, enjoyed the support of the church and clergy for which we are grateful. Phone calls complaining about the bells are never easy to deal with but we are always given the full backing of the Minster if the bells are rung within reasonable limits.

Shirley McGill, Captain of the Tower

## Children & Young People

The pandemic made an adverse impact on our provision for children and young people on Sunday mornings. It is good to see children and families week by week on a Sunday morning using the children’s area which enables them and parents/guardians to be present for the Church’s worship. During the pandemic a regular monthly Sunday afternoon service started for children and their families. It is valued by those who come, but numbers are low despite a lot of publicity through our church schools. The children’s Good Friday Liturgy was well attended as well as the Children’s Nativity on Christmas Eve.

2023 saw the introduction of a celebration of baptism service, as part of the regular pattern, to which those children baptised at the Minster over the past year were invited, with their families. A party with tea and cake followed and both the service and party were well attended.

In January 2023 there was a pizza party for those aged 13-18 in the church which was great fun for the good number who attended.



Through the involvement of choristers and choral scholars the Choral Foundation exposes children and young people to the Church’s liturgy, preaching and festivals. The Royal School of Church Music awards undertaken by choristers enable them to excel in musicianship but also require biblical and liturgical knowledge too.

At Candlemas, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, we made a particular point of praying for discernment of how best to minister to our children and young people. It is an inter-generational scene: a baby brought by young parents, Mary and Joseph, to the Temple, received by the wise, older

people Simeon and Anna. It is a model for a church community, made up of different generations gathered in a holy place around Jesus Christ.

Sadly the numbers of children attending St George's post-pandemic has not recovered, but we are blessed with a 4-5 children who attend regularly, and often join in with Sunday School, which is run by Lynne and Deanna: the children often talk about how much they enjoy it.

#### Prayer

*Heavenly Father, you nourish your Church with your love: help the Body of Christ in this place to nurture everyone, especially her children and young people, that, together, we may deepen our knowledge, grow in wisdom and always be ready to give an account of the hope that is within us. Amen.*

Fr Andrew & Fr David

## The Parish Magazine

This has been another successful year for our Parish Magazine, with the printed copies growing in popularity; it is always something of a challenge to decide how many copies we should order, as we need to balance the cost of printing against the possible income from sales, but as the most recent issues have sold out, we are looking into increasing the print run. The printed copies are sold for a minimum donation of £1.00, but thanks to the generous donations of our readers, it has been possible to break even on the printing costs and some issues have made a small profit.

We have continued to upload a digital version of the magazine to the Minster's website for those who prefer to read online.



Fr Andrew and I have continued with the idea of having a theme for each issue. We begin by commissioning several articles on the chosen theme, and congregation members are also invited to contribute ideas via a notice in the Minster Bulletin. The August / September 2022 issue, 'Celebrations', featured articles about the Minster's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, the baptism of two of the youngest members of our church family and the anniversaries of priestly ordination celebrated by Fr Andrew and Fr Arthur. The October / November issue took the form of a tribute to Martin How, in which members of the congregations of the Minster and St George's shared their fond memories of Martin alongside reminiscences from Martin's friends and colleagues from far and wide. The December 2022 / January 2023 issue, 'In the News', included stories of special events including the 90th anniversary of the consecration of St George's, a Confirmation service at the Minster, Black History Month and a Packing Day in support of the

Separated Child Foundation. The February / March issue invited congregation members to share their thoughts on how they observe Lent, and most recently, the April / May issue explored the theme of Kingship, weaving together the themes of Holy Week and Coronation. Congregation members were invited to share their experiences of meeting Royalty, and two of our young people, Kyra and Tyra, wrote beautiful letters to King Charles to celebrate his Coronation.

My thanks go to Fr Andrew for his ideas on commissioning and liaison with guest contributors, to Denise Mead for her assistance in preparing the diary pages, to Alice Bishop for her meticulous proofreading and to Deborah Miller for her management of the magazine's advertising revenue. Most of all, I want to thank our contributors who make the magazine what it is. We are fortunate to have a number of regular contributors who supply the magazine with interesting and thought-provoking articles, interviews and poetry; sadly, one of our regular contributors, Jon Blanchard, passed away last autumn, but we have been able to remember him by publishing a few articles which he wrote before his passing. Alongside our 'regulars', it has been a pleasure to welcome several new contributors this year, and we pray that in the coming year, this number will continue to increase.

If you have an idea for a theme or an article for the Parish Magazine, please speak to me or Fr Andrew. We are very keen that everyone should feel able to contribute to the magazine, and we would love to hear from you.

Liz Watkins, Parish Magazine Editor

## Report from the Minster Education Officer

The Minster offers bespoke tours to schools and groups wishing to visit our wonderful church building. In the last 12 months, we have hosted visits from Trinity and Archbishop Tenison High Schools, Beddington, Greenvale and Broadmead Primary Schools, our own Minster Junior and Infant Schools as well as Bensham Manor School who are our most frequent visitors. We also welcome adult groups, this year welcoming 2 lots of people from the Croydon U3A as well one from the Sutton U3A. We also entertained a group from the Croydon Richard III Society, the Croydon LGBT Christian Group and the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society.

I also go out to societies and groups and give talks to them about the history of the church and the people connected with it. I have recently given talks to the CNHSS and the Probus Club about people from the world of business and commerce who were buried here.

Aspects of the history of the Minster are read and appreciated by many readers of Inside Croydon, the online local newspaper for whom I write a regular Sunday Supplement column. Among the many varied Minster topics this year have been the connection to The Royal Waggon Train, the Life and Service of Edith Cooper, The Recollections of Frank Butler, a former longer serving Verger and Rev. Roland Phillips our Tudor Vicar. If you have never read any of these pieces, this is the link. <https://insidecroydon.com/tag/david-morgan/>

I also deal regularly with queries from a variety of folk who email in and ask for information that might be in our archives.

The history of this church and the folk associated with it is such a rich one. I continue to try and spread the word about its importance and interest as widely as I can.

David Morgan, Education Officer



## Parish Safeguarding Officer's Report

We were able to resume school visits in September 2022, making sure that Risk Assessments are undertaken in accordance the Guidelines. All choir helpers were encouraged to undertake on-line Safeguarding courses, as were the music department leaders and the PCC which includes members of both the Minster and St George's congregations.

We thought we were relatively up to date with DBS checks however the Safeguarding Department have at last brought-in the 3 Year renewal scheme, rather than the existing 5 Years. I am so grateful to Tiffany Willmer who has been making a valiant effort to contact all those on the existing register and updating their DBS's.

Diane Edwards & I lead the chaperone teams for Choir rehearsals and we are grateful to all our team for their assistance. We are particularly grateful to those who have undertaken the Council Chaperone courses which makes life easier when we take the choristers out.

Denise Mead, PSO

## Outreach: Separated Child & Floating Shelter

Twice in the past year we have undertaken to support a packing project with the Separated Child Foundation. We have joined with them to pack survival bags for children who arrive from abroad with nothing, mostly young lads. The first session coincided with Harvest Festival and was a great success. The second session was in February and was equally a success. On both occasions a very tasty lunch was cooked by Fr David Adamson Hill. Thanks to him – and to all who came along to pack, stack and box these essential items.

Again, we were unable to provide a winter shelter this year and all the talk of a bigger homeless hub were shelved due to Croydon Council's precarious financial situation. Actually for us this was a blessing in disguise as we have no heating in the hall or hot water in the kitchen and no spare funds to mend either. It seems unlikely that we will be allowed to run winter shelters in this way again.

However, on a positive note, we were able to provide 100 sandwiches on seven Sundays evenings during February & March and take them to Nightwatch along with cartons of soft drinks, crisps, cake & fruit. A huge 'thank you' must go to those of you who helped to fund this project. With your generosity we were able to go the extra mile and not necessarily rely on church funds – thank you.



Denise Mead, Shelter co-ordinator

## Deanery Synod 2022/23

The Deanery Synod met 3 times over the past year. The meetings always open with prayers and close with 'The Grace'

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 – The main presentation was given by Nicola Newman, Deputy Director of Croydon Drop In which is a youth counselling and advisory & advocacy service. This meeting said farewell to Revd Simon Foster the Area Dean who was retiring to Eastbourne.

14<sup>th</sup> September 2022 – The main presentation was given by Liz Bridge, Chaplain of Wandsworth Prison who appealed for knitted hats for prisoners and this resulted in over 200 hats being knitted and then sent to her at the prison. The new Area Dean Designate, Revd Dr Geoff Dumbreck was introduced at the meeting, and he led the closing prayer.

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023 – the main feature was given by Steve Calder & Janet Martin on behalf of Croydon Citizens.

As a "Head's Up", I have been asked to find a speaker from the Church of England Guild of Vergers for the September meeting, so watch this space!

Denise Mead, Deanery Synod rep on behalf of:  
Stephen Willmer, Sue Williams, Laurence & Liz Gough

## Social Events at St George's

A large part life at St George's works through our social program, with an event each month of the year. These have been very well attended throughout 2022, and much fun has been had by all who attended. Particular thanks go to those who work so hard to make them happen, be it by organising a particular event, by helping with catering and refreshments, or by working on stalls.

Events in 2022 included a race night, a quiz night, a Burns night supper, our summer BBQ, and of course the Christmas Fair.

Fr David



## Report on the Minster Nursery & Infants' School

This has happily been a far more normal year for the school, post Covid. Some lingering attendance issues still cause concern and staff are working hard to resolve them. The school atmosphere remains a happy one and the other governors and I always find the classes we visit and observe to be busy and full of interested and involved learners.

One of our Deputy Heads, Kerry Van Der Berg, is on maternity leave following the birth of her son and sadly but only for us, she has decided not to return to teaching. Kerry was the school lead on Faith, frequently taking groups of children to The Minster to support their RE learning. We shall miss her very much.



The big change for the school this year is our transfer from management by Croydon Council to becoming one of the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education Academies (a Multi Academy Trust or MAT school). This transfer has involved our structure and data being analysed and investigated to ensure that it would be appropriate for the MAT to include us in their cluster of academies. We officially became a MAT school early this year and are now starting to experience a far greater degree of observation and external control than we have been accustomed to having.

We are hopeful that the school; in terms of the children and staff, will greatly benefit from this major change and that we will stand up well to the greater degree of external involvement which will now become the norm for us. Next year's report will be better able to assess its affect.

Diane Edwards, Chair of Governors

## Report on Minster Junior School

*'Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and do good'* Hebrews 10:24

Dear PCC Members, as Chair of the Governing Body of the Minster Junior School it is my privilege to present a report on the school for the last year.

Minster Juniors has been on an exciting journey recently with the successful transition to membership of the Southwark Diocese Multi-Academy Trust. This has brought about major changes in the Governance of the school which will help it to grow in strength for the future. We have been very grateful for the support of Mark Burnett and other members of the Trust in helping us make a smooth and successful transition and look forward to a confident future in the MAT.

We have also benefitted over the last year from the support of Mrs Martina Martin, head of St John's School in Shirley who was providing additional support to the acting head of school Claudette Green during the maternity leave of Hannah Farhan our headteacher. I am pleased to say that Hannah has now returned to school and we welcome her back as headteacher.

I am also pleased to report that RE at school is flourishing at the moment under the guidance of Mrs Karen Hewitt, the RE lead. The school was recently awarded a Gold RE Quality Mark for progress in RE which is a fantastic achievement. Minster Juniors also won an award with Croydon SACRE for a fantastic piece of artwork on the Holocaust that featured at the Croydon Holocaust Memorial event and are also involved with other local schools in the Heartstone Odyssey Project to tackle racism and bullying through storytelling. The Christian distinctiveness of the school is now firmly embedded within the life of the school. All classrooms have a prayer space with an additional dedicated prayer room. We have a school prayer which is used regularly and I will include this at the end of my report. Every term we have a school Eucharist which is normally held in the school hall and has become an important part of the school community. We also make regular visits to the Minster for acts of worship and the children have visited a number of places of worship from other faiths in the local area and have built up good relationships with other faith communities.

Music is flourishing at the school and Minster Juniors have benefitted with the establishment of a new choir through the Croydon Sings initiative and the involvement of Madame Sophie Garbisu who has been working closely with Ms Laura Munns the music lead at the school. Back in January, a number of pupils from Minster Juniors were privileged to take part in the *Gabrieli Roar!* event at Westminster Cathedral alongside members of our own Minster Choir. The Minster Juniors Choir has also taken part in the Croydon Sings Christmas Concert at the Minster and the Bishop's Lent Call service at Southwark Cathedral.



Sport has always been strong at Minster Juniors and the school has achieved a Gold School Games mark for the third consecutive year. The Boys' Football team won the league and qualified for the finals at Crystal Palace. The girls too qualified for the final tournament at Crystal Palace and came second in the Croydon championships. The tag rugby team came second in Croydon, having won for the last nine years! There have been other successes in cross country, hockey and basketball. There have been some wonderful improvements to the school building and grounds over the last year including 'The Canopy' an inspirational reading Area with an outstanding nature mural created painted by our Artist in Residence. There is also a beautiful new sensory garden that has been developed with Sophie Eustace, a former parent governor which will be formally dedicated by Bishop Rosemarie next term.

The school has been involved in Courageous Advocacy work for local charities with Staff & pupils donating to the Croydon Baby Bank.

It has been an honour to serve the school as Chair of Governors over the last year and a privilege to see it grow and develop. We are very grateful to Fr Andrew and the PCC of Croydon Minster for your ongoing support and keen interest shown in the work of the school.

I end this report with our school prayer

*Dear Lord,  
thank you for Minster Junior School and the opportunity it gives us to learn,  
develop and be with our friends.  
May we show concern for those around us, listen to each other and be at peace with all.  
May we seek to help one another in all that we say and do throughout each day.*



*May we show love, compassion and care to those around us  
and seek to be always kind and responsible in our actions.  
We are sorry for the times when we have found it hard to make the right choices.  
Guide us always to do good in everything we do,  
always following in your footsteps. In Jesus' name.  
Amen.*

Fr Alan, Chair of Governors

