

CHRIST CHURCH PURLEY



Annual Report 2024 -2025



A Celebration and review of 2024 as we report back, look forward and give Glory to God.

The Annual Church Meeting will start at 10.15am.

Close of meeting at c.11.30am.

AGENDA 2025

Opening Worship

Under 18s review

CCK and CCY go out

Confession

Reading: Romans 11:21-32

Sermon: Martin Ryan

Vestry Meeting – elect wardens (2 minutes)

2 vacancies

APCM

FORMALITIES (2 minutes)

Apologies

Minutes of last meeting

Matters Arising – no matters arising not covered in report elsewhere

ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS (3 minutes)

PCC elections – Nominations for PCC (3 for 3)

Appoint stewards / welcome team

FINANCE AND ELECTORAL ROLL (5 minutes)

New Electoral Roll report – 163 (last year 264)

Accounts – presented and questions welcomed

Appoint auditor for 2025

THE FUTURE (7 minutes)

VICAR Review and Looking forward to 2025

Brief Questions & Answers

Closing worship

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VESTRY AND ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS 2024

Meeting	APCM Meeting		
Date and Time	Sunday 28 th April 2024 10:15am – 11:20am	Minutes taken by: Louise Benn	
Present	107 adults and 11 children present in the church.		
		Action	by
1a. Vestry Meeting	Wardens are elected every year and Bob and Alison have presented as wardens, so no election is needed. Invitation to Assistant Warden to elect in 2025 to shadow the wardens over the next year. Doug thanked Bob and Alison for their service thus far.		
2. Welcome, Apologies	No apologies received.		
3. Minutes	Minutes of 2023 meeting approved and accepted. Doug gave his thanks to everyone involved in the running of church.		
4. Matters Arising	No matters arising not covered in report elsewhere.		
5. PCC elections	Nominations for 4 PCC members for 5 vacancies. Next Deanery Synod election due in 2026. PCC: Tomilayo Ejedenawe proposed by Jude Barber, Seconded by Jean Loh Christopher Hicken proposed by Kim Watts, Seconded by Peter Wrench Neil Penn proposed by Jenny Hird, Seconded by Pauline Chapman Kim Watts proposed by Frank Coburn, Seconded by Jean Loh No election is needed.		
6. Electoral Roll Report	Closed at 264.		
7. Accounts	Accounts to December 2023 headline income and expenditure plus reserves presented by Rob Keeler. Report from independent examiner states no concerns. Net assets are £454k net, £200k been allocated to the refurbishment project. This years' income is £392k, expenditure is £375k, leaving a surplus of £16k.		

	<p>The income has increased by 14% compared to last year, the expenses have remained flat. Donations have increased by 5%, and lettings have increased by 26%</p> <p>Compared to last year; we had a deficit of £32k, we are now in surplus of £16k, which is a remarkable turnaround.</p>		
8. Appoint Examiners for 2024	<p>Appointed Harmer Slater Ltd as examiners.</p> <p>Proposed by Richard Slade, Seconded by Nick Whitley. All in favour.</p>		
9. Appoint Stewards	<p>Appoint Stewards (Front of House Team)</p> <p>Front of House: Christine Bull, Rob Keeler, Diana Mitrea, Peter Wrench Back of House: Ian Cleghorn, Peter Wrench Prayer Ministry: Nick Whitley, Helen Whitley</p>		
10. Worship	The band led us in a time of worship.		
12. Closing Q&A	Doug closed the meeting; the band led us in worship.		

AREA: VICAR'S REPORT

HOPES

2024 started out with hopes to build upon past work in the areas of a focus on evangelism, a pressing in to listening to God and being led by the holy Spirit, finding ways to partner with other local churches on a bipartisan basis and for mutual support and equipping of like-minded, missional churches across the denominations. A building up of our pastoral team, encouraging ministry to young and old alike and an exploration of what it means to be a truly inter-generational church where all are valued as made in God's image. Progress in the plans to refurbish and repair the worship space. Knowing and sharing the good news of Christ and seeing God's kingdom built here.



HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS

The prayer course, Black History month, the encouragement of visiting speakers, large outreaches into our community where hundreds visited the car park (or church centre where rain stopped play!), seeing new people come to us and come to faith or grow in faith, the continuing surprise visitors have that we provide a free café with coffee and cake, that the donations there more than cover the cost of the ingredients, training courses that equipped, seasonal services that spoke afresh into the Gospel, innovations and a burgeoning use of the church centre. I could go on. There are so many things to be thankful for and ways in which God has been moving in people's lives and ministries that have made a difference – new and continuing.

CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES

What I didn't know until 1st January 2024 was what personal devastation was to unfold. I have personally walked through a maze of emotions and been frankly under par. I therefore thank all who have persevered around me in pursuit of the kingdom. God has been both faithful, present and gentle with me and I have discovered a deeper passion for his commission. So, if I go on about it more (in these reports and elsewhere) there is a reason.

I am not the only one facing personal struggles. We all know of someone who is going through dark valleys of one form or another. My encouragement to all is that he is faithful, he is loving and he is there.

The end of the year brought forth an unforeseen crisis in that by January 2025 we had to suspend Christ Church Kids and Christ Church Youth on Sunday mornings. I thank God for the response to this crisis and that we are now operational again. I also thank God for the inspiration of truly all-age, all engaged *Worship for Everyone* which move from audience consumer and lead provider model to all involved in discussion, activities, reflection, contribution and prayer. Without the crisis we might never have pressed in so much, through necessity. Maybe, just maybe....

OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2025

Paul Williams of the Bible Society in Canada is amongst many who have written in 2025* in these terms:

"For much of my Christian life, I've responded to announcements of imminent revival with a mixture of doubt, irritation, weariness – and sometimes faith. So, it's with a real sense of irony that, in recent months, I found myself saying that I believe we are on the brink of revival."

Identifying the roots of new atheism and new age spirituality not delivering what they promised, many, especially of younger generations, are coming back with a new inquisitiveness to the claims of the Gospel of Christ. Not because it is their tradition, but because it is different and not!

"If the scale of these changes had occurred in one denomination or in one location, we'd certainly be talking about it as a Big Deal. But it is even more powerful that this 'quiet revival' is astonishingly widespread. It draws attention not to a particular leadership style or way of doing church but rather points to God's agency. Revival is about God coming very near to people, especially those outside the Church, so they can experience and know him. I believe [we are at the beginning, not near the end, of what God intends to do among us in Britain.](#)"

From recent events and words, pictures and prompts that we have received I would concur. Most recently through our Firelighters time was a prompt to fast, pray, lament and repent. These times this Lent have been very powerful and revealed a number of things – not least our insular reticence to share the Gospel with others. But also, a hope that God is doing a new thing.

If we choose to be part of this, the changes and the challenges to the status quo are not over. In fact, they are only just beginning.

"One way of expressing our faith today is to stop the non-essential and make room for God in our lives. We will literally need to make room for new believers coming into our congregations. But this making room is also psychological and emotional - and involves trusting the Holy Spirit when we feel pushed out of our comfort zones. I believe that unity will be of particular importance in coming decades – not simply among those who are like us, but across Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant confessions, and across cultural divides of race, class and socio-economic status."

A post revival Christ Church, and "The church in Purley", will look very different to now. In make-up. In networks of collaboration. In structure and in practice. There is room to keep the good of the old and the requirements of the new. No baby out with the bathwater. But a few rubber ducks may need to go!

Phil Moore has written about the revival sweeping Iran, a Muslim country. New believers are multiplying through the non-believer taking the good news and exploring with other non-believers where they are. Not the attractional model of "convert and join us" but instead, seek Jesus together with your family, friends and networks. Prepare these new believers to share with others in your community.

The word pioneer in church circles means doing things differently outside of the church walls. Not dismantling what works now, but adding a catalyst that multiplies growth. They are not in competition for each other, but instead, it adds to the stability of gathered church to grow and cultivate outside of it. An organic growth that is more vibrant and dynamic than the institution can muster.

If any of this sparks a light in your heart, come speak to me. If it strikes any fear – "Do not be afraid. For I am doing a new thing" says the Lord.

PRAYER REQUESTS

That we will increase in our confidence and conviction that the Gospel is good news and that Jesus will be on our lips. Testimony will flourish and flow into conversation. That the pioneer spirit will stir in those whom God is calling. That we will grow in corporate prayer, in prophecy and in obedience to his call. That we will become readier for what God is doing and plans to do (for we

can never be fully prepared!). That we can grow as “the church in Purley”, those hungry for mission and led by the Spirit grounded in God’s Word. For healing and miracles to grow as signs of the kingdom. Thy will be done on earth as in heaven. Amen.

<https://www.premierchristianity.com/opinion/revival-is-coming-but-is-the-church-ready/18948.article>

MINISTRY AREA: CHURCH WARDENS’ REPORT

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?



- to represent the congregation at Christ Church ensuring that their concerns are heard and addressed.
- to support Doug and the Ministry team as they lead the church and welcome new members through the various outreach events.
- to involve ourselves in the care of the church buildings and financial management.
- to be a welcoming presence on a Sunday morning and during the week at the foyer coffee shop.

WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

It is always a delight to see

- new members being welcomed by our congregation and being encouraged to get involved in the life of the church.
- the generations mixing easily together both in the church services and in the foyer.
- the numbers that attend the Easter and Christmas Children’s outreach events and the involvement of the Church family to make these happen.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM FOR 2025?

Moving on into 2025, we would like to see us welcoming more people to Christ Church, whether that is through our Children’s outreach events, the Foyer coffee shop, the Alpha Course, the Bereavement journey, Midweek Fellowship or any of the other activities that take place at Christ Church.

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

The new Church Wardens as they settle into their roles, understanding what is expected of them and realising the gifts that they have that they can bring to their tenureship.

ANYTHING ELSE?

As our tenure comes to end, we would like to finish our report by adding that it has been a privilege to serve as Church Wardens. We would also like to thank those who work, behind the scenes, on various committees, to ensure that Christ Church operates smoothly day to day, has buildings that are kept in good repair and has money to allow all this to happen and events to take place. A huge thank you to all of them.

Alison Frost and Bob Benn

AREA: PCC REPORT

HOPES

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is both the legal body that oversees the strategy and operations of the church under church law but also the Board of Trustees under Charity law. Our hope is always to diligently consider the mission and ministry of the church and to prayerfully seek God's will for the fabric and finances that support it.



HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS

We met six times between May 2024 and March 2025 as follows:

May – vision for youth, church refurbishment, arrangements for Saturday lets, evangelism and hopes for an ecumenical Mission conference

July – an update on the Church of England LLF project, report from the Welcome project, report from the Evangelism Task Force, Report from the Racial Justice Group, the decision to offer both common cup and dipped wafers at Communion, adopting revised Financial Controls policy and Working Expenses policy

September – plans for Black History Month, a review of whether we should channel some or all of our pledge to the Diocese through the Ephesian Fund, appointment of school Governors, a review of Leadership structures to support strategic decision making, deciding to meet separately to determine priorities for refurbishment

October – **extraordinary meeting** to determine priorities for church refurbishment so that technical team can work up options and plans

November – staffing review update regarding youth provision, adopt the 2025 budget, review of Conflict of Interest policy, report on First Fruits Sunday, Review plans for Worship for Everyone, CCK and CCY, Prayer and Discipleship including Bible Study, Evangelism plans for Christmas including prayer and pint

January – review of teams and volunteering, adopt revised Lettings policy, adopt reviewed Lone Worker policy, update on Safeguarding Audit, Racial Justice Group update, school update, evangelism review after Christmas, # serve, prayer, update on church refurbishment and other works

March – receive and adopt the annual accounts, adopt Wi-Fi policy, decide format of APCM, review of other business, pray.

CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES

Knowing how to respond to the challenges facing the wider Church of England continues to be a conundrum both in the areas of safeguarding failures across the wider church and the divisions caused by LLF. Slow progress on areas such as Racial Justice and Evangelism development as well as the long-term staffing of 0-18 including youth continue to need to be priorities into 2025. As we start to receive plans for the church refurbishment we will need to turn our attention to balancing the needs of the project with the available finance and need to raise further monies. Finance remains stable but we still budget for an annual deficit.

We aim to finish our 8pm meeting by 9.30pm and while we have come close we have not yet managed it!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2025

There are opportunities to progress support for all ministries – to young and old alike. Support for Evangelism is key as well as prayer. Progress on the plans for refurbishment will help as the needs of the worship space become more evident as we use it more flexibly. Progress on Racial Justice and diversity more generally are key as is some greater certainty about the support for the youth team who are doing wonderful work with our young people. LLF is on the back burner nationally with proposals most likely not to reach General Synod before February 2026 and therefore these discussions need not distract our attention from the priorities listed above.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Pray for your PCC that they will act with discernment, listening keenly to God for his direction and path for us as a church. Pray for his choice of wardens to become evident!

WELCOME TEAM

We would like to thank all those who provide a friendly welcome and help our services run smoothly. Our welcome team members are:



Alison Frost	Diana Mitrea	Paula Reed
Amanda Shortland	John Curror	Peter Wrench
Andy Hird	Lola Bejide	Richard Parris
Rob Keeler	Marion Keys	Rowayda Mukhtar
Bob Benn	Mike O'Connor	Steve Gilbert
Cynthia Smith	Nicola Hawes	Adenike Adamo

ELECTORAL ROLL

Every six years each parish church is required to **prepare a new electoral roll -2025 is the year for the new electoral roll**. This means that everyone has to apply to be included and the number starts at 0. Our new Electoral Roll shows that we have **163** people signed up (last year we were at 264). However, this is not an accurate reflection of the congregation numbers, as not all our members are on the current Electoral Roll. If you are not on the Electoral Roll, your vote at the 2025 APCM will not be counted and you cannot be on PCC, Deanery Synod or a churchwarden. Please check with me if you are unsure.



If you are not already on the Electoral Roll, do think about joining– you are eligible if you have worshipped with us for at least 6 months (young people can join when they turn 16). It is not just a means of being able to vote at the Annual Church Meeting, or to stand for PCC or Deanery

Synod; it is a way of showing belonging to the church. Forms can be found in the Church, there is a QR code to sign up with and forms are in the church office or can be sent to you by email.

Jean Loh Electoral roll officer

MINISTRY AREA: CARE - PASTORAL - *Elderly, Visiting, Bereavement, Meals Ministry, Prayer Network, Adults with Learning Disabilities, Peaced Together*



WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES FOR 2024?

Our hope and prayer is that members of our fellowship, especially the vulnerable and lonely, whether able to attend church or not, feel valued, loved and cared for as Christ commands us to do. Also, most importantly that we walk beside them in their Christian journey.

WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

- Increased numbers at Mid-Week Fellowship, many from non - church backgrounds. Opportunities to invite them to church events.
- The joy of those coming together at Mid-Week Communion followed by fellowship at lunch.
- The lovely participation of our adults with learning difficulties in the intergenerational services. Good communication with them from members of church.
- The privilege of helping people grow in their faith or even introduce them to Christianity.
- Happy times at Holiday at Home gatherings. Also new faces.
- New people coming to Christ Church.
- Bereavement journey courses are going well and are much appreciated by our guests. The majority stayed for the optional faith question session.
- People receiving meals from our meals ministry much appreciate them.

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

It is hard to talk about achieving when it is pastoral care. The ministry is so often reactive rather than proactive.

We would always desire to be Christ's ears, eyes and heart so that we see people as He sees them and act accordingly. This is such a privilege.

As far as bereavement support group is concerned terms of reference were written and a draft plan for the year was made.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

- We desperately need more volunteers who would be willing to drive people to church and to appointments on a friendly basis.

- Members of the fellowship who have “pastoral hearts” to take part in the next pastoral training sessions and then, hopefully be part of our much-depleted team.
- More people who are good listeners!
- Visiting people with dementia is hard!
- I would like to see more mentoring of new members and that involves all the fellowship.
- Group dynamics have been challenging when people are vulnerable.
- Unexpected death of members within the bereavement group.
- The prayer network upgrade is still a work in process.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM FOR 2025?

- When taking home Communion to the housebound, there are opportunities to share the Gospel and pray for the individual on a personal basis.
- At Mid-Week Fellowship opportunities to share church events and to have prayer at the beginning of each session.
- Peaced Together’s new course will bring Christianity into each session. A new pilot has been launched and will take place later in the year.
- There are opportunities to signpost participants in the bereavement groups to other areas of church life, e g Alpha, Living with Loss Services and the foyer.

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

We ask always for God’s wisdom and discernment in all that we do - to be good listeners, patient and bearing the fruit of His Spirit.

ANYTHING ELSE? HOPES FOR 2025

There are plans for the future for new events for our older members of the congregation. We would like to start weekly events on a Wednesday afternoon when there is not MWF or monthly Communion. We are thinking about “Christianity Explored” and/or “Tea and Questions”. Also set up a monthly Sunday tea in people’s homes and a visiting scheme where CC members visit our older members regularly, so that we are truly an intergenerational church.

Also enable any pastoral trained members to feel used in this vital ministry using their individual gifts.

THANK YOU

To all those who are quietly getting alongside others in so many ways, whether it be transporting, cooking, making tea/coffee, washing up, laying tables, waiting on people at lunch, making Mid-Week Fellowship birthday cards, facilitating groups, distributing meals etc!

Jenny Hird

AREA: SAFEGUARDING

HOPES

Our hope is that by diligence in our approach that Christ Church can be a safe place for all, especially the young and vulnerable adults. That where a concern is raised that it is dealt with appropriately and that we constantly learn from our experience that we always aim to improve.



HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS

A recent Safeguarding Audit (self-assessed) identified that our current practice meets the required breadth and approach required of us by the national framework and that only minimal adjustment are required as a result of the findings.

CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES

Concerns do get raised and at one point near the end of the year multiple ones came in at the same time. This is in common with many churches which has meant that the excellent service from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team has been reduced to triaging referrals so that they can cope with the most serious and urgent ones. Out of hours emergency advice has also recently been removed for the same reason. This is explained by the atmosphere of being afraid to get it wrong given the headlines about historic, and more recent, failings across the wider church.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2025

In early 2025 we launched a session reviewing safeguarding practice in Christ Church to clarify what is a concern, what to do if you are concerned depending on the nature of the disclosure and what happens to a concern when raised. This has been run for the Youth team and CCK and has helped to clarify for many what our procedures should be.

We also have five principles that we advertise weekly in services, in the news (and therefore in the Foyer) to ensure that everyone knows that Safeguarding is their concern.

Greater awareness of the need for Safeguarding also helps everyone understand the increased paperwork to ensure that things are in place. Through volumes of processing new ways of dealing with bulk applications have been developed and proved effective. Our thanks to our PSOs for diligently ensuring that these processes happen effectively and as swiftly as possible.

PRAYER REQUESTS

That we are protected from harm and that we always seek to do the right things where concerns are raised.

A reminder of the Safeguarding Principles we introduced in 2023:

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES



Safeguarding principles

Everyone protects boundaries and vulnerabilities by reporting.

- 1. EVERYONE:** Everyone is the eyes, ears and heart of a safe **church**
- 2. PROTECTS:** *Safe Church* intends to protect the vulnerable and the innocent and put off the perpetrator
- 3. BOUNDARIES:** Safe Boundaries are key - if in any doubt, ask first
- 4. VULNERABILITIES:** Power imbalance is always part of abuse - that's why we particularly safeguard children and vulnerable people
- 5. REPORTING:** Report don't solve or investigate

MINISTRY AREA: YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES FOR 2024?

- To enable each and every child and young person who are members of Christ Church to grow deeper in their faith, recognise the transforming love of Jesus and move in the power of the Holy Spirit in their ordinary, everyday lives.
- to enable families and the whole church family to deepen their worship together side-by-side.
- to pastor and support families in their own journey of faith



WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Our incredible children and young people whom we have the joy, honour and privilege of serving, supporting and encouraging.
- Our wonderful parents/carers who support and nurture our younger members.
- Our incredible team who serve so faithfully, servant-heartedly and with such commitment - jumping in where needed and supporting each other so beautifully.

JOYS:

- We celebrate and thank God for the 125 children and young people who have attended our Kids and Youth ministry over 2024, with nearly 70 attending at least monthly. Thank you to each and every child and youth who have taught us what it is to seek after God's heart, want to discover

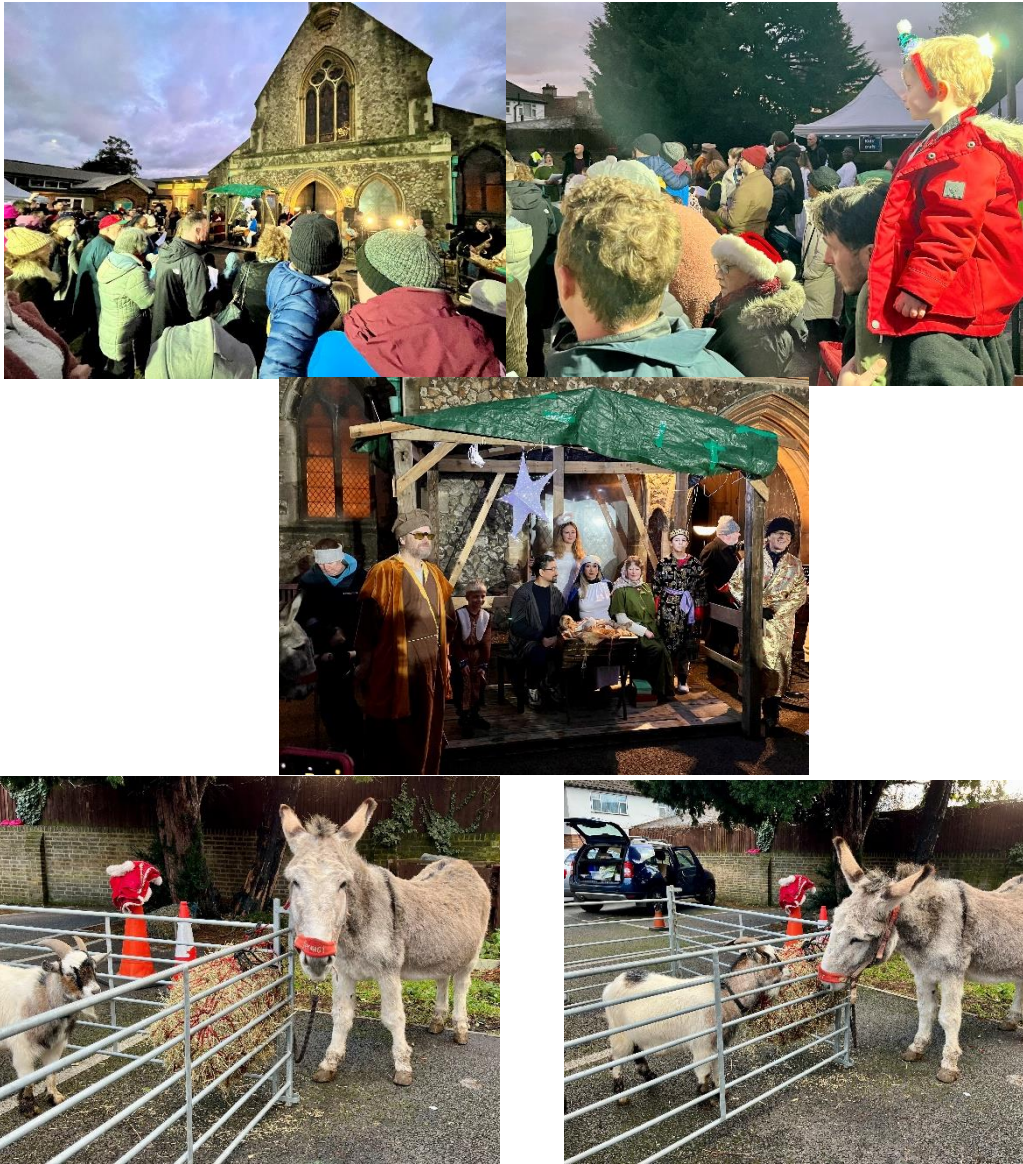
more of who He is and have such profound understanding and faith...all through fun and excitement!

- We celebrate and thank God for the incredible team who have so wonderfully served our children and young people, nurtured, taught, encouraged and prayed for each individual and who have poured themselves into sharing Jesus' love with our younger members each week. Thank you to each and every one of you who have so faithfully served with such a heart for the children and youth and who have been willing and able jump in to help when needed - you are truly amazing and we are SO GRATEFUL to you. Thank you,

- We celebrate and thank God for the opportunities to worship together as a whole church family, recognising the importance of side-by-side worship and in celebrating together. We especially thank God for our Uniformed organisations and those who have faithfully served the children and young people for so many years and for times when we have been blessed to worship together at Mother's Day, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas. Thank you to all the leaders who have led and supported in so many ways. Thank you.

- We celebrate and thank God for all of our family events that have welcomed so many of our local families to church to experience the Easter and Christmas stories as well as to receive the enormous welcome, love and joy from Christ Church to our community. On Good Friday, we welcomed a staggering 583 people as we explored the Easter story through immersive experience, prayer stations, activities and animals- it was a joy to see so many people recognising Jesus' death and resurrection. For summer, as part of our fun day, the church, car park and every inch of space was taken over by 392 people enjoying ice-creams, donkey rides, craft and inflatables. So many commented on how wonderful the day was and how welcoming the church was by providing such a high-quality event for free. In December, costumes were worn, carols were sung and we followed a donkey through Purley as the Christmas narrative was re-told through our Live nativity! Each of these events were so joyful and was such a beautiful time of sharing Jesus with so many families.





None of these could have happened without an absolutely fantastic team of wonderful volunteers who have given so much time, effort and energy. Thank you to each and every one of you - **THANK YOU!**

- We celebrate and thank God for the WOW party that took place as an alternative to Hallowe'en. It was wonderful to work alongside Purley Baptist Church to welcome approximately 150 children and their adults to a night of celebrating Jesus! Fancy dress ranged from a giant axolotl (okay...that was me!) to tigers, cats and even a zebra (okay...that was Graham!)- We explored God's wonderful creation through inflatable, crafts, games, prayer stations and Christian Magician and learnt that we are God's masterpiece! Thank you to all those who helped make this such a wonderful event in so many ways!

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

- To develop, teach and encourage children and young people to grow in their faith and to support them in their walk with God through studying 'The Lord's Prayer,' 'Unexpected people of God,' and apologetics (Although the children know it as our 'Detective agency!)- to discover what we believe and why!

- To build connection, relationships and belonging with our families in the community through our events and immersive experiences.
- to support, encourage and enable team to come alongside our younger members and share faith.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

We have so much to thank God for, but our greatest challenge has been with team numbers. We recognised in September the lack of team members due to many varied and totally understandable reasons (e.g. moving house, change of job etc). So as to abide by all safeguarding guidelines and with a heart to have 'best practice' for all concerned, we were unable to safely run our Kids' church as desired. Although we had some incredibly committed team members, we sadly did not have adequate numbers to enable us to run separate groups for Key Stage 1 and Key stage 2, as well as greatly depleted team in preschool and youth. This led to the difficult decision to amalgamate groups for the autumn term (resulting in a decline of children attending) this led to a focus to attempt to recruit team in September and with devoting November to our initiative SERVE.

Sadly, due to low numbers, we were led to the difficult decision at the end of the year to close all kids and youth ministry going into 2025.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025?

- We thank God for our incredible children and young people and pray that we would learn from them what it is to have such faith as we in our turn share our lives with them.
- We praise God for the incredible, devoted and amazing members who have prayed, fasted and signed up for team in January 2025, enabling us to recommence our Kids and youth ministry in February.
- We thank God for all the connections and blessing we have encountered with local families and pray for more opportunities, deeper connection and the joy of sharing Jesus with them.
- we pray for opportunities to reach wider and deeper with children and young people in our community so that all may come to know Jesus.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- We pray for blessing on our children and young people - that they would know God's protection, guidance, love and presence.
- We pray for our parents/carers; that they would be supported, encouraged and enabled to know the unique and joyful role they have in the lives of children and young people's faith.
- We pray for our incredible team who have served so faithfully and thank God for them. We pray for team going forward into 2025; that each and every person may know God's call on them and delight in them.

- we pray that God would continue to bless the families in our community so that our relationships lead them to a life of faith

Jude Barber and Charlotte Hunn



MINISTRY AREA: COMMUNITY: CHURCH CENTRE USER GROUPS

WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES FOR 2024?

Here, at the bookings department of CCP, we certainly hoped that we would still be able to attract people with a selection of smaller and bigger spaces to suit their needs and pockets.

WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

I think it's safe to assume that we've managed to bring happiness to those who have used the church space, and I'm pleased to share the gratitude expressed in their own words below:

"We really enjoyed the evening and the venue was fantastic and many guests were impressed with the venue."



"Thank you for opportunity to rent the venue for our daughter party! Definitely we will contact you for future parties and we will recommend your services to our friends and family!"

"We had a lovely party there thank you... for sure we're going rent this hall again."

All the good reasons to celebrate another successful year as a venue hirer!

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

We hoped that in 2024 the bookings department would still manage to attract a steady number of hirers, and not just from Croydon but from other boroughs as well.

We did our best as a team to respond to the hirers' needs and wishes, to address any grievances and attend repairs, along with making adjustments that would allow them to fully enjoy their stay here.

Just think of replacing the old and grainy projector with the state of the art smart TV in the Philippi Room!

On top of everything else, we enjoyed a consistent number of regular hirers, counsellors, church- and uniformed groups - as well as one off Saturday events.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

In previous years, when the events were allowed to finish at 11pm, it could cause certain issues as hirers would extend their time in the venue without notifying the office. That would create a knock-on effect on the cleaning team who wouldn't be able to carry out their duties, as well as the caretaker who would need to see the hirer off and to make sure that all the necessary safety checks were done before Sunday morning. Even if that meant being on site till late at night or early in the morning.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025?

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

The continuous and unfailing growth of the bookings section and for the team to never lose faith in one another; as well as be able to communicate their thoughts freely and without reserve.

Magda Faltynowicz



MINISTRY AREA: YOUTH GROUP - TUESDAY EVENINGS WEEKLY



WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES FOR 2024?

Our focus is to provide a space for 11-18's to meet, reaching 45 young people of which 30 attend regularly. We delight in making sure every young person is welcomed, seen and valued by the team and each other, providing food, games, encouragement and a thought-for-the-week style look at the bible and topic.

WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

What the young people and parents say:

"I like hanging out with my school friends and making new friends in the community. I also enjoy the activities that we do during bible study. I find it meaningful, and I learn lots of new things."

"I enjoy meeting friends who don't go to my school anymore"

"As a parent, I like that it is a safe space for children to meet and stay connected"

"I really enjoy cooking so I enjoyed those like the bread and pancake making and I like playing football with the others. I really liked the bowling trip too that was a good idea"

"I do have different views, but it has helped me to connect to God more than I used to."

"I have more of an understanding of the Bible"

"I really found thinking about how God is never busy and he's always there for everyone very meaningful."

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

- relationship building - going well
- retention and growth - we have grown from 20 to 30 a week
- see young people draw nearer to God - achieving, although more could be achieved with more team
- provision of mindful craft - Jean Loh has brilliantly taken this area of provision on





WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

- Bible discussion works in small groups so it's a struggle when we don't have the leaders to accommodate this. Often only a bare minimum team
- **We are at a crisis point come September needing many more leaders to accommodate the up-coming Year 7 with potentially 20 more young people. Demand for a mid-week Youth Group is high, we can't miss this window of opportunity to connect.**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025?

- worship night with other Youth Groups
- dividing the group at bible time and seeing the older one's open up in conversation
- seeing those of no faith grow in curiosity
- build on basic knowledge of Jesus gained from Christ Church Primary School
- encouragement to invite friends especially to end of term events
- cooking ministry! Chatting while doing and learning
- training the young people to lead

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- the young people and their bond with each other
- the existing team
- several additional team members with a sense of humour and desire to disciple
- ideas for additional bible study group with a meal
- provision for university preparation and post-uni discipleship group



ANYTHING ELSE:

The Tuesday Youth Group Team are truly amazing and our sincere thanks goes to them all for their joyful consistent every-week serving. Thank you Kathy Bradford, Andy Cooper, Tomi Ejedenawe, Jean Loh, Ken Lupata, Richard Parris, Martin Ryan, Liz Sarkodie and Doug McHardie and Jude Barber stepping in at short notice and William Hunn setting up and David Hunn clearing down. The church could not be more grateful.

Charlotte Hunn

MINISTRY AREA WORSHIP: MUSIC

HOPES AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2024

In 2024, we hoped to find new ways of involving young people in our team; to continue our journey to worship using songs from different parts of the world; and to introduce a system for our projector which made life easier for those preparing services and operating the projector.



Highlights of the past year

The choir led the worship at the Christmas carol service and Good Friday afternoon service and received various favourable comments. In addition, it was a joy to have a new gospel choir contributing to our Live Nativity and Christmas carol services. The gospel choir also led us in worship at a service during Black History Month. We introduced new songs from a variety of cultures during that month and are continuing to use them in our worship.

Richard Slade adds "I play the organ at the 8.45 am traditional Sunday services which still seems to be appreciated and the congregation enjoy singing the hymns. The average number at those services is between 20 and 30 people".

At the other end of Sunday mornings, it has been encouraging to see an increasing freedom and fluidity of worship at our 11.45 services. And we have greatly benefited from the input and creativity of our more recent worship leaders, Liz Channon and Rachel Beaton.

It's also very encouraging that we have managed to switch to new software to organise services and project words/visuals onto the screen.

CHALLENGES

We've made less progress than I'd hoped in involving a wider selection of young people in our ministry team. But we are blessed by those young people who are involved.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2025

There are always opportunities for new members to join our choirs at Christmas and Good Friday – please contact Richard Slade if you would like to do so. Male singers are sometimes in short supply, both in the choir and in worship bands. And we welcome instrumentalists who want to serve God using their gifts. We hope to continue with a gospel choir this year.

Another aim for 2025 is to switch to using tablets instead of sheet music for band members, thus saving a considerable amount of printing and paper.

PRAY FOR ...

Please pray for those selecting hymns and songs for the services, and leading sung worship, that they may help every congregation member enter whole-heartedly into praise and worship week by week.

Graham Duncan



MINISTRY: HOUSE GROUP

The eagle-eyed will notice that our groups are now no longer 'house' groups but 'discipleship' groups, which is more aligned to Christ Church's mission statement.

In the past year the ten groups have studied various topics and Bible books. Most have risen to the joyous challenge of studying Romans either through the Bible Society's video course, led by Andrew Ollerton, or with study guides. Either way, we have journeyed from the valley of sin, up through the mountain peaks of chapters 8 to 11 and down to the onward mission of chapters 15-16. Some have found the content life-changing, for which we praise God! The teaching has been reinforced by our continuing sermon series on Romans.

During Lent many of the groups, including an ad-hoc one, meeting at church, have been "At The Cross" each week, looking through the eyes of various disciples who witnessed the crucifixion.

We are so thankful for our persevering, committed leaders. Please pray for them and for those who join in, week-by-week, for deep encounters with Jesus that flow into our church and everyday life. Particularly, that we would all be able to proclaim on our onward mission, with boldness and grace, that

"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes." Romans 1 v 16.

Martin and Sara Ryan

AREA: DISCIPLESHIP – EQUIPPING

HOPES

The primary way in which we equip, other than through Discipleship Groups which are a separate report, are through courses and encouraging reading through the SEEDS bookshop.



HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS

The whole church Prayer Course in services in the early part of the year felt like a risk, making services a little different without a sermon as such, but they landed well with many people. Many felt encouraged in their prayer life and this is reflected in greater take up of corporate prayer gatherings which have been sustained in a way never before.

The witness course has been run in other churches locally as well as here in an open course and for one Discipleship Group. Its encouragements and challenges to own and articulate our own faith story was appreciated by all the groups that engaged it.

Prayer ministry training was appreciated by those who now form the rota of prayer ministers at services. Pastoral training came to a completion and all participants are engaged with pastoral ministry, especially supporting the bereaved.

More recently a basic guide to safeguarding here at Christ Church has also helped put the safeguarding landscape into perspective.

CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES

Capacity is always the issue. Finding time in the diary as well as the time to run courses and events. A planned Purley churches equipping event in May did not happen for that reason.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2025

There is an opportunity in 2025 to prioritise equipping in the following areas:

- A further pastoral training course starting in May and extended out to local churches
- Equipping more service leaders and preachers
- Supporting Discipleship Group leaders and growing the number of groups
- Mentoring especially for our young people and young adults
- Building confidence to witness and give testimony, telling our faith stories
- Encouraging and building up both prophets and evangelists

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for clarity of God's priorities and making priority time to build up and equip more people for service in readiness for what God is about to do.



AREA: EVANGELISM

HOPES



Jesus commissioned his disciples to "GO, make disciples!" Our mission is to *Make Passionate Disciples for Christ*. We can think of evangelism, sharing the good news (literally), as being the few speaking to those they meet in the community and bringing them into church. Truly evangelism is sharing good news, even to those who have already heard it, and building us up and encouraging us that it is true and life giving. Truly Good News! The hope is that all will be gradually built up in our faith, filled with his Holy Spirit and fire, and bubble over with the good news that is in us!!

HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS

Alpha continues to be a mainstay of the systematic way of sharing good news and allowing the opportunity to come to faith. Some of those you see around you on a Sunday have either come to faith through Alpha or have been revitalised in their passionate faith through it – either as participant or as leader. Lisa led for all her time here on Alpha courses which were one of her passions. She built up a dedicated and sensitive team for which I am grateful and was able to lead alongside a very capable team.

It was a joy to co-host a Christianity Explored with Alive City which gives a different perspective on the good news and blessed a small group of participants as well as those leading.

Advent and Christmas led us through the opportunity to ask *Who is Jesus?* And Holy Week the question *Ask me why?* These invitations to explore the Christian faith continue as ways to engage conversation. Especially in the big community outreach events at Christmas, Good Friday and in the summer where literally hundreds of people, many not from churches, attend and discover more of the Christian story.

Some prayer walking took place which is a joy and what an Anglican parish church should be doing. Praying for the whole parish – with the requests of parishioners!

CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES

A small band of willing volunteers formed an Evangelism Task Force but I confess that my own personal challenges this year perhaps laid an inertia on the work of that group. But they are dormant not demised (see below!)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2025

In 2025 the commission from Jesus has not gone away, it is as vital, if not more so, than ever before. Sharing good news, inviting people into a relationship with the living God who saves their souls. The commission is not an invitation but a command – Go!

Holy week is a time of revitalisation and renewal of the faithful to go out for the other 358 days intentionally sharing good news, the free gift that keeps on giving.

You are invited to be part of this movement, joining what God is already doing (and testimonies of which are increasing).

This is the most important priority of "the church" today.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Come Holy Spirit. Give us the words. Convict our hearts. Send us out to speak into the opportunities you provide.

MINISTRY AREA: SCHOOLS MISSION

WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES FOR 2024?

Our aim is to bless our local school communities so that each and every person, young and old, is supported, encouraged and rooted within the community and comes to know more of who God is and His enormous love for them!



WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

- We thank God for the joy of our School's outreach projects: 'CSI:Easter - the case of the missing body' for 7-11yrs and 'Christmas Unwrapped' for 5-7yrs! Over the two events, more than 500 pupils have learnt the Christian message of Jesus' birth, death and resurrection through immersive and exciting workshops! We have had so many teachers, staff and children thank Christ Church for the engaging and wonderful times that they have had discovering more about Jesus! It could not take place without an enormous team of incredible volunteers who help to set-up, lead, assist, support and pack-down the workshops - thank you all so much!
- We thank God for the Collective worship opportunities that we have over the year, including each week in Christ Church, and half-termly at Ridgeway and St David's schools. The pupils are always so thoughtful, sensitive and reflective and lots of laughter has been had by all - special thanks to both Doug McHardie and Emily Tate (Spinnaker) for their wonderful help!
- Junior Peaced together is a beautiful, sensitive and supportive course for Year 6 pupils. The course helps children to explore how to be resilient, recognise their feelings, grow to support each other and identify that even through difficult and challenging circumstances, they know that God is with them. They have discovered and developed life-skills to support their well-being, recognise who they can turn to for support and develop personal attitudes to situations. Special thanks to Trevor Jones, Debbie Booth, Sheri Brown and all those who help lead Peaced together and pray for the participants.
- In 2024, we saw the launch of 'Operation Forgiveness' a Yr6 workshop about anti-knife crime and the power of Jesus' to help victims strive to forgive. It has been a very powerful, moving, challenging and we hope, life-changing experience for the pupils and teachers alike; enabling each child to recognise how to be safe, to resist peer-pressure and to recognise the value of each and every life. Alongside the very practical nature of this workshop, pupils have also identified how the love of Jesus can help Christians to strive to forgive and love others, even in tragic circumstances. Special thanks to Emily Tate and Caroline Obonyo for your support and leadership.

- We thank God for C4 (Christ Church Christian Club) that ran each lunchtime during spring and summer term. Each week, the children learnt about God through games, storytelling handicraft with an average of approximately 6 KS2 pupils and 40 KS1 pupils each week! Special thanks to Ian Atkins, Trevor Jones, Debbie Booth and all those who have supported, encouraged, played and chatted with the children each week!
- Monday prayers for Christ Church take place every week in school, led by Charlotte and attended by a faithful group of parents and carers. Covering each activity and class in prayer and God's protection is an honour and privilege - thank you to Charlotte Hunn and each and everyone of you who pray for our wonderful school.

Cake Wednesday is always so gratefully and enthusiastically received by the staff each half term! The delicious homemade cakes and hot coffee is always a treat and blessing to our brilliant and dedicated staff! Thank you to all those who bake, serve and support Cake Wednesdays; you truly bring great joy!

- 'Coffee and a cuddle' takes place on the first day of the school for parents/carers in Reception class! This is always well received and appreciated by adults as their little ones start school and a new season begins! Thanks to all those who provide refreshments, welcome and support to each and every parent/carer!

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

We set out to encourage, support and enable our school communities to grow to know Jesus more and to experience and receive the love and support of His church here in Purley.

We seek to enable individuals to grow in their individual understanding of God and personal faith, as well as seek ways to love, support and pastor each individual well.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

We would love to continue to develop these areas and more! I am so thankful for each and every person who has given up so much of their time to support and assist in so many ways!

We would love to expand our teams, time capacity and identify further opportunities to support schools further!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025?

We thank God for all that has taken place over 2024 and all the lives of pupils, parents/carers and staff who we have had the joy of journeying alongside!

We would love to run more workshops (especially Operation Forgiveness) in more schools, grow deeper relationships with parents/carers throughout the year and seek to identify what opportunities God is opening up and to join Him in the next adventure!

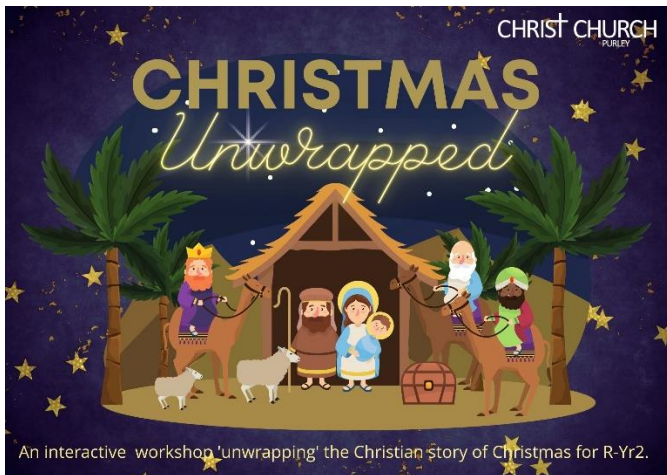
PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Thankfulness for each and every person who has helped support our local school communities in so many different ways!
- Provision of more team and opportunities to support and run more workshops, courses, activities

and events for schools and parents/carers.

- Opportunities to develop even deeper and stronger relationships with families in our local community.

- all those who have heard the message of Jesus to grow and deepen in their journey of faith.



MINISTRY AREA: THE FOYER

WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

Welcoming new visitors to the Foyer.
Breakfast table well established and popular.
Building relationships with regular visitors.

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

To maintain a warm and welcoming space for people of all ages to enjoy.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

Maintaining enough team volunteers to cover all shifts.
Baking enough cakes to meet demand.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025?

Morning prayer 3 days a week in Foyer.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

New volunteers to join the existing team.
The many parents and small children who visit regularly.



AREA: SOCIAL ACTION/ OUTREACH

For the fifth year since our floating night shelter closed at Christ Church, we have asked members to make sandwiches for the Croydon based homelessness charity 'Nightwatch' (<http://www.croydonnightwatch.org.uk>). During January and February, we provided over 100 loaves of sandwiches plus other donated items which were then distributed by the Nightwatch volunteers. This practical support is really appreciated by the charity, while the number of street homeless and vulnerably housed people continues to rise in the borough. Thank you to all involved this winter.



Amanda Shortland

TEA AND TALK – A CHRIST CHURCH MOTHERS' UNION INITIATIVE SUPPORTING REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

OUR PURPOSE – to share the unconditional love of Jesus through fellowship, support and learning English.

WHAT WAS NEW –we have constant change with families leaving and others joining.

HIGHLIGHTS – we joined in our 'friends' joy when they had permission to stay and kept in touch with many as they settle in other parts of our country. We celebrated Christmas with fun and games and gave wrapped toiletry gifts for the families. One of our families who now live in a flat in Croydon invited all helpers for a meal on two separate occasions. One meal for the men and a meal for the women. We encourage all to visit Christ Church Foyer for coffee and cake and some do. Also, we are supporting the new initiative Open Kitchen enabling refugee women to cook.

STRUGGLES - many of our 'friends' have anxiety and even depression because of the uncertainty of their lives and the length of time waiting.

We are now settled well into Haysthorpe Hotel where they all stay. We meet in the Hotel on a Thursday morning 10.30am -12noon. We are made very welcome.

We have 7 helpers and usually 5 or 6 attend. We also have a MU member who prays for us every Thursday. We work well together and care for each other and we give thanks to God for the privilege to serve in this way. We would also say that we learn and are blessed by all our guests who become our friends and we hold them in our prayers.

Cynthia Smith – group leader

PURLEY FOOD HUB

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

We at the Purley Food Hub are continuing to provide emergency food parcels for those referred to us by our ticket partners. We are also continuing to support and work with our local food stops and other charities in Croydon.



WHAT WAS NEW IN 2024?

2024 was slightly quieter than 2023 with fewer clients being referred to PFH. In 2024 we delivered close to **41800 meals to 4682 people** for Food Hub clients and their families. High numbers are still being seen at Purley Food Stop where they can have 60- 80 clients when they open at 9am on a Friday morning with clients often queuing from 7am. In March 2024 Purley Job Centre ceased to refer clients directly to PFH and will only signpost, this has resulted in more clients being referred by Purley Cross Centre based at Purley Baptist Church.

WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

It's a real pleasure to get feedback from clients and our ticket partners examples are given below. One Client said "To everyone at Purley Food Hub, thank you for everything you do for everyone that is struggling. Every one of you are amazing – there should be more people like you all." One ticket partner emailed: "I spoke with our client last Thursday and he was very appreciative and thankful for the food deliveries from the Hub. Thanks so much and keep up the good work." And two others wrote: "Thank you very much for all of your assistance over the Christmas period with our tenant" ... "Thank you so much for the update, your help has been incredibly appreciated by the team and our client"

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

We are expecting an increase in demand for our services as the increases in the cost of living begins to take effect in April with rising fuel prices and council tax.

More volunteers are always welcome particularly for delivering food parcels and also to train as a Client Support Volunteer. Please get in touch at pfhchairoftrustees@pfoodhub.uk or purleyfoodhub@gmail.com if you would like to know more.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025

At Purley Food Hub we encourage Christian volunteers who have contact with the clients to pray with them if both are comfortable with praying. The building of relationships with clients with ongoing support is good opening to share the gospel and show that God can supply all their needs. We also have a number of non-Christians in our pool of volunteers with the opportunity build relationships. Team leaders are encouraged to pray at the start of or delivery sessions and member of the management committee has created simple pray that all can use.

Trevor Jones Chair of Trustees

OPEN KITCHEN - SOCIAL JUSTICE

WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES FOR 2024?

In 2023, Open Kitchen was set up to meet the needs of refugee families living in a local hotel. These families had not been able to home-cook meals for a long time because there are no facilities to do so at the hotel. Food is provided by the government, so there is no funding to buy ingredients.

My hope was to provide a space where families could cook a meal that reminded them of home, for their enjoyment and emotional nourishment as well as physical nourishment.

I also hoped to meet some practical needs, for example for parents who were weaning their children but did not have access to suitable foods for this important stage of development.

WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

Food brings people together and each Open Kitchen presented an opportunity for relationship and conversation. Whilst I was able to offer hospitality, I enjoyed hearing stories from the cooks' homelands and tasting some of their delicious meals.

During Advent, we heard about different ways of celebrating this season in different nations, including through traditional foods.

Each family are so grateful for the regular opportunity to cook meals that they enjoy. This is especially true when there are important celebrations, such as Christmas or birthdays.

Although we can only accommodate three cooks at a time, the families often share the meals or snacks they have prepared with other families at the hotel.

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

Contacts with the hotel were lost at the end of 2023 so my hope for 2024 was to re-establish links so that families were made aware of the invitation to come and use our kitchen.

In Autumn 2024, volunteers from another refugee venture approached me with the news that some ladies would like to cook at the Open Kitchen. With this renewed link, I have been able to re-establish Open Kitchen in a more sustainable way.

The aim was to build a stronger connection with the refugees through the weekly tea and talk so that we could reach more of the families at the hotel. I have now been joined by a small team of volunteers who can host the Open Kitchen, meaning we can host cooks more frequently.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

Christ Church has funded the set-up of this ministry.

The main challenge is to sustain funding for the purchase of ingredients and equipment.

As we get to know the families, we become aware of hidden challenges that they face because of the catering system that is in place in the hotel. For example, expectant mothers are not provided with additional food or the healthy range of food we might expect until they are at least 5 months pregnant.

There are currently 8 ladies on our WhatsApp group who wish to cook but we can only provide three spaces each session. We cannot meet the need and would really like to offer more sessions.

As the kitchen is heavily used during the week, we are not able to meet the demand for the kitchen.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025?

Every Open Kitchen provides an opportunity to offer hospitality and build relationship through conversations.

We have an Open Kitchen WhatsApp group for planning and can post information about church events and other useful services for the families who come along.

As we build relationships and live as a friendly face in what can otherwise be quite a hostile environment, we have opportunities to talk about faith and continue to meet wider needs.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Each of the families that have contact with the Open Kitchen; that they will know Jesus' love through our hospitality. That they will grow to trust the volunteers and be able to build relationship with us.

For ongoing funding for the Open Kitchen (approx. £30-40 per session)

God to show us how to develop the ministry to meet the needs of families (spiritual and physical), that are sometimes hidden, i.e. nourishing pregnant women, supporting early development through foods for weaning

Opportunities to extend the ministry, i.e. by speaking about this simple act of social justice to other church communities

Mary

AREA: 7TH PURLEY (CHRISTCHURCH) RAINBOWS (APRIL 2025)

Rainbows are the youngest members of GirlGuiding UK. We currently have 11 Rainbows.

We have two leaders and two young leaders running Rainbows. In July both Julie and I will be stepping down from Guiding. We have been advertising for new leaders to no avail at the minute and our hope is that 7th Purley Rainbows will continue after the summer with a new team and are ever hopeful that a couple of people will be found to continue running this section. For more information please see www.girlguiding.org.uk. Failing to find people in time, could risk the unit closing altogether. Once a unit has closed, it is very difficult to re-open.

Over the last year, we have continued offering a varied programme of activities for the Rainbows; ranging from crafts, games and over the coming months, lots of outdoor activities. We had a joint sleepover with the Brownies in July and a further sleepover in September. Everyone had a great time and I am ever thankful to those who gave up their time to be able to help on these events. We work towards various challenge badges with the Rainbows which gives us our themes for each term.

I would like to thank all our families for supporting us over the years; and a special thank you to all of the adults and young women who have helped us at varying points since we have been the

leadership team at Rainbows. Thank you to Julie, as every and to our two young leaders, Megan and Zoe; we wish them well with their upcoming exams and what the future will hold for them; and most importantly the Rainbows – who we come each week for!

Francesca Taylor & Julie Cooper Rainbow Guide Leaders



MINISTRY AREA: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT- MOTHERS' UNION

WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES FOR 2024?

Continue to contribute to The World-Wide mission of the Mothers' Union. We believe that united in faith and mission we can bring about tangible change.



WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

- Presentation of the Bronze award for Gender Based Violence (GBV) campaign
- Ran the Mary Sumner Day service for the diocese, followed by a shared lunch
- Provided hospitality for a number of life events/church events
- Continued to support local refugees with Tea and Talk

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

- Find a replacement to take over the Branch Leader role
- Recruit new members
- Set out to achieve the Bronze Award in GBV
- Work more closely with the church
- Raise funds for Mothers' Union works, both at home and abroad
- Continue to run the Friday Craft and Chat table in The Foyer and recruit more helpers

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

Differences of opinion regarding fun/family day event on Good Friday

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025?

- Make steps towards achieving the Silver Award for GBV
- Supporting Tea and Talk sessions at local hotel housing refugees
- Opportunity to talk/ lead a service about our 16 Days of Activism campaign (call to end gender-based violence in all forms)
- Praying and hospitality to support MU members who had a bereavement during the year

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Carrie as she takes on the leadership role. Strengthen her faith and equip her with the necessary skills
- That the Branch may continue to support families/vulnerable people in our church and wider community

Carrie Penn

MINISTRY AREA: MISSION PARTNERS

WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES FOR 2024?

- To complete our link with a parish in Zimbabwe
- To resume our Mission Partner Sundays



WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

Establishing a link with St Martin's Parish Church in Amaveni, Central Zimbabwe. It is a joy to see the two MU branches regularly exchange news and pray for each other.

The highlight during 2024 was to welcome the following Mission Partners:

Fred Silva who manages the work of Emmanuel International (EI) in Brazil and Sue Fallon Emmanuel International UK office manager. Fred spoke about the EI projects in Brazil and Sue thanked the church for our long-term prayer & financial support for the work of EI.

Chris Chapman from the Croydon Zimbabwe Link shared with us his impressions of a recent visit to Zimbabwe and about St Martin's, Amaveni.

Pastor Yuriy (a contact of Chris Elston) and his family spoke about their ministry in Transistria. We concluded the day with a bring and share lunch to meet and get to know this delightful family better.

Dr Berhane Asmelash from Release International shared with us his own experience of Christian persecution in Eritrea.

These Mission Partner Sundays gave us a first-hand insight into their work and how we can support them not only financially but also in prayer.

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

To forge closer links with our link parish in Zimbabwe

To include Rush UK (Bishop Lucy's charity in Kenya) as a Mission Partner.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

- To raise awareness and engage the wider congregation
- Having to withdraw financial support to some of our mission partners

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025?

- To raise awareness of the work and needs of our Mission Partners
- To continue the Mission Partner Sundays in 2025.
- To continue to build on the link established with St Martin's, Amaveni
- To host a fund-raising event for Rush UK.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Our Mission Partners often working under difficult and dangerous conditions.

Indrani Balachandran

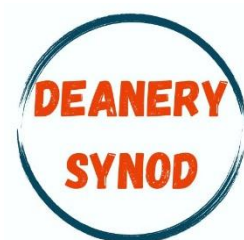
CROYDON SOUTH DEANERY SYNOD 2024-25

Our theme for 2023-24 was "Welcoming Church". Within that, on 20th February 2024 at Christ Church, we tackled the issue of Unconscious Bias. We welcomed Rt Rev Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Bishop of Croydon, who gave a very thought-provoking presentation, based on the diocesan training course.

Unconscious Bias was something we all suffered from, so no judgement was involved. The issue was how to recognize it in ourselves and tackle it. Bishop Rosemarie shared practical strategies for doing this.

Building on the 2023-24 theme, our focus for 2024-25 was sharing our Faith and, specifically, how to equip ourselves to do that.

At St Mark's on 6th June 2024, we welcomed Imani McEwen from the diocesan Children and Young People (CYP) Team who shared some revealing research on young people's attitudes to



faith and spirituality, and the resources available to assist churches in the vital work with children and young people. It also provided a valuable opportunity for churches to reflect on their CYP work: and the joys and challenges involved in it.

On 9th October 2024 at St John's, Rev Canon Will Cookson, Diocesan Director of Mission and Dean of Pioneering Ministry & Fresh Expressions gave an exciting presentation on "Sharing Faith: Telling Your Story". This included details of the Diocesan Investment Programme. for which £30 million had been secured from the National Church. The session also provided opportunities for Synod members to reflect on key issues in groups. Particularly revealing was the exercise in which we looked at maps of our parishes to pinpoint places where people gathered and where there might be opportunities for Mission.

Before the meeting at Christ Church on 6th February 2025 we shared a delicious meal, kindly prepared by members of the Christ Church family. The meeting then concentrated on various aspects of recruiting and training volunteers for the work of the Church.

Ven Carol Coslett, diocesan Assistant Director of Lay Ministry, described the Southwark Vision for Lay Ministries. There were various kinds of Affirmed (local/parish), Commissioned (diocesan) and Licensed (nationally recognised) Lay Ministries, each with their particular training pathway. Resources were available to help with recruitment and training.

In this context, Deanery Lay Vocations Champions will play a significant part. We are very grateful to Mrs Linda Etheridge (All Saints', Sanderstead) for accepting the role for our Deanery.

Rev Sue Thomas (on behalf of Rev Jono Simpson who was away on a mandatory course) then described the techniques used in a recent, highly successful, volunteer recruitment campaign at St John's.

Volunteers, once recruited, need to be trained. Rev Doug McHardie then described a course in Pastoral Care delivered at Christ Church over 15 months or so. Christ Church was very happy to assist other churches in similar endeavours.

Finally, Jude Barber, Lead Children & Families Pastor at Christ Church gave a fascinating presentation on work in this area in the parish. This included statistical information on attitudes to a spiritual matter among children and families, which very much chimed with the information from Imani McEwen, demonstrating how vital this work is to the future of the Faith.

The key procedural item covered by Synod last year was the election of the Deanery representatives on Diocesan Synod: Rev Justine Middlemiss (All Saints', Kenley & St Barnabas') and Rev Doug McHardie (Christ Church) to the House of Clergy; and Mrs Nicola Howe (All Saints', Kenley) & Mrs Indrani Balachandran (Christ Church) to the House of Laity.

As ever, I am indebted to Chris Babbs, Secretary, Croydon South Deanery Synod' for this comprehensive summary.

Nick Whitley

MINISTRY AREA: CAROUSEL BABY & TODDLER GROUP - TUESDAY MORNINGS WEEKLY



WHAT WERE YOUR HOPES FOR 2024?

Carousel thrives in its mission to grow relationships and in 2024 our primary focus has been to see families draw nearer to God and have a place to meet other parents, currently welcoming around 45 families a week and reaching 100.

WHAT WERE THE HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS TO CELEBRATE?

What parents say:

"The staff are wonderful and I feel very comfortable and secure. It's a safe place to be."

"Although I wouldn't say I am very religious, my daughter and I still love the bible stories."

"The children's lullaby is one we sing every night before bed."

"I enjoy how welcoming and friendly all the staff are"

"The most meaningful part for me is bible story time with Scruffy."

"All the bible stories are great, a great way to teach everyone good values."

"Just love it. Keep up the good work, the playgroup is brilliant."

"The people who run it! So friendly and welcoming!"

"Thanks for running this group! I've been coming with each of my children since my eldest was little so about 6 years now and we love it!"

WHAT DID YOU SET OUT TO ACHIEVE IN 2024?

- weekly invitation to Preschool Sunday Group - no takers yet
- summer opening - we opened all but two

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES?

- Some weeks we run with a bare minimum team

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM IN 2025?

- bible story time being unashamedly Christian but optional. May the room remain full!
- adults invited to discuss/share a topic question with those around them
- singing faith-songs for teaching
- singing the blessing song over the children and witnessing the Holy Spirit in the room
- the reintroduction of the prayer box
- open conversations around faith
- invitations to all our seasonal events and services

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- a move in curiosity about Jesus
- ideas for accessible ways for parents to attend courses or Alpha
- leaders for a 'New-Baby Group' in collaboration with The Foyer
- one or two new members of team good at warmly welcoming with a heart for chatting/encouraging.

ANYTHING ELSE:

Carousel has a stunning team of volunteers who each bring their gifting to Carousel every week and huge thanks for all their hard work go to Mary Sharpe, Gabby Welch, Yvonne Brown, Mags Polyviou, Sheri Brown, Gill Bell, Cynthia Smith, Amanda Shortland, Frank Coburn, Graham Duncan, Mandy James and William Hunn setting up. The church could not be more grateful.

Charlotte Hunn

AREA: LIFE EVENTS

HOPES

It is always our hope that the nature of being a parish church opens opportunities to meet new people as well as support those already in our fellowship. If you live in the parish boundary you have a right to be baptised (after preparation) and to be married (subject to certain conditions) in your parish church. This means that people can come to us because we are "their parish church". This is the strongest strength) and (weakest weakness) of the Anglican parish church.



HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS

We hosted one very local wedding in October, with a Tolkien theme and a visiting preacher with connections to the spiritual formation of your vicar (!) It was a glorious day for Laura and Greg and a privilege to be part of.

We baptised a number of people though the year. The requirement to do at least part of the Alpha course for parents of children coming forward for baptism brought a number onto the Autumn course and at least one came out the other side and is a regular member and has joined a team.

CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES

We lost a number of church members of long standing in 2024 and early 2025 including Margaret, Hugh, Paul, Barbara, Joyce, Marjorie and most recently Margaret. It is one of the privilege's of parish ministry to walk alongside those who lose loved ones and officiate at an event that is both an opportunity to mourn and grieve but also to remember the lives that have been lived.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2025

We continue to offer life events to anyone who lives in the parish and beyond and we press into the opportunities it provides to give loving support and also to share the hope that is in Christ.

PRAYER REQUESTS

That each one of these events will be an encounter with the living God.

AREA: OFFICE SUPPORT

The office is open Monday to Friday 9.30am - 12.30pm.

Church Suite: The Church Suite calendar is now linked into our website.

Please check that all your details are up to date and if you are on a rota that you show your unavailability. If you are unable to carry out a duty please make sure that you arrange a swap and don't just decline your role. You are all important to the smooth running of Christ Church Purley.

Please, review whether you are displaying the personal information that you want to share because Church Suite default is "hide" so as to meet GDPR requirements!

If you would like any help in using Church Suite please let Jean know.

The **Website** is being updated weekly to reflect what is happening at Christ Church.

The Advent calendar on the website has proved to be very popular this year with the individual day interactions being from 915 to the highest of 1261!! This is up considerably on last year's figures (almost double).

Speak to me if you would like to be involved in this year's calendar – plans are already underway...

Publicity: Using posters, making use of Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Podcasts continues to be an area of development with a growing number of followers. Have you liked any posts? Are you following us on Facebook and Instagram – there are at least 2 posts every week?

Services support: We started using Worship tools planning and presenter in the autumn and this has made compiling the services much easier. Everyone that needs to has their own login and can add items to the service remotely. Worship leaders are as a result able to add their own songs in the correct keys and with the correct verses. The next stage will be for band members to use tablets so that we no longer have to print the music each week.



HIGHLIGHTS AND JOYS:

- #askmewhy campaign on social media, podcasts, YouTube and the website were a great success.
- People attending events due to seeing the posters or our social media posts.
The advent calendar interaction numbers.

Jean Loh



AREA: CHURCH FABRIC TEAM

Our team has two aims: to keep the Church and Halls in good condition, and to make sure the various missions and activities of Christ Church are fully enabled and supported.



Routine maintenance has been carried out, repairing things as they go wrong. The following major maintenance contracts were carried out:

- Boilers, heating and control systems for the halls complex.
- The hot air heaters for the Church
- "PAT" checks of mains cables, extensions, and portable equipment.
- Annual check of security systems.
- Multiple minor repair works, drain clearance, and repainting.

Additional items

- Further roof repairs at the junction between the Parish Hall roof and the entrance doors 'dormer' roof, which ought to cure the leak outside the office reception. Improved drainage over the Swamp/ Ephesus room
- Failed flooring near the Church South Door has been removed, revealing parts of the original floor.

We were not successful getting enough quotations for gutter works. Equally it is becoming difficult to get replacement fluorescent light bulbs, and we have a lot of these! A car collision in Brighton

Road spilled over the pavement, and a car has badly damaged 9 metres of our flint front wall. This is still standing (just!) but will need to be rebuilt. We hope to recover most of the cost through insurance.

The work of keeping our gardens and grounds clean and looking good continues, organised currently by Cynthia Smith.

Project team meetings have begun for a "Christ Church 150" plan to renew the original church interior: its floor, lighting, and redecoration.

TG March 2025

SUMMER HAPPENINGS AT CHRIST CHURCH PURLEY

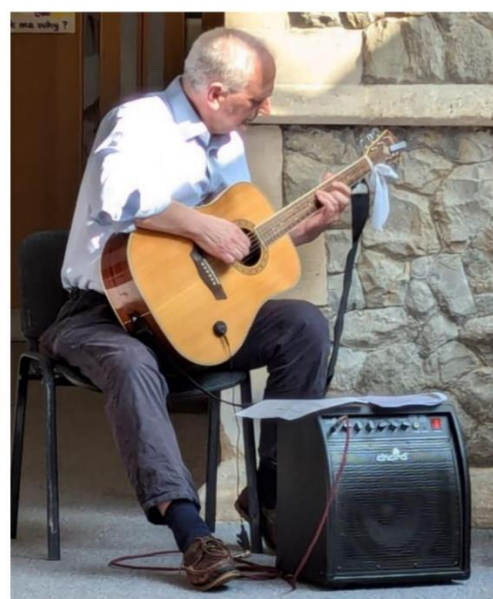
LISA'S FAREWELL BBQ



HOLIDAY@HOME



Line
dancing



Hidden talents

Christ Church Purley, Brighton Road, Purley CR8 2BN

www.christchurchpurley.org.uk

May 2025